The Cornhill Magazine

George Smith, William Makepeace Thackeray

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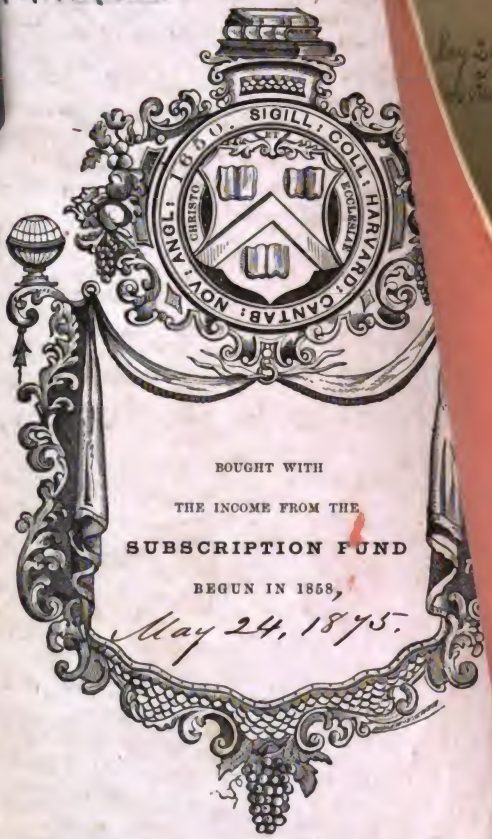

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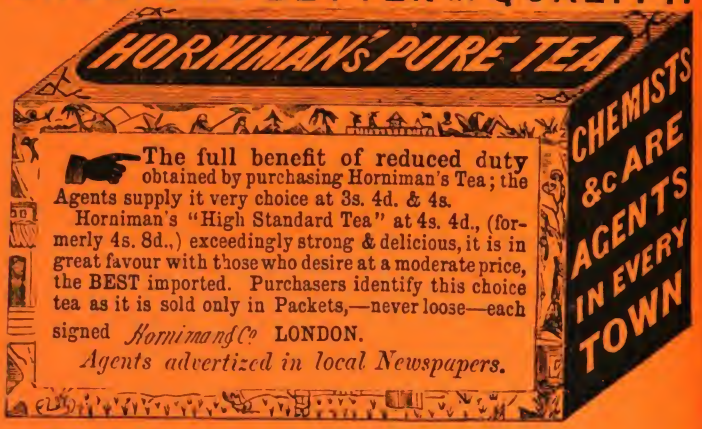

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"Will his Eyes open?

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THE

CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

JULY, 1863.

Romola.

CHAPTER LXII.

THE BENEDICTION.

ABOUT ten o'clock on the morning of the twenty-seventh of February the currents of passengers along the Florentine streets set decidedly towards San Marco. It was the last morning of the Carnival, and every one knew there was a second Bonfire of Vanities being prepared in front of the Old Palace; but at this hour it was evident that the centre of popular interest lay elsewhere.

The Piazza di San Marco was filled by a multitude who showed no other movement than that which proceeded from the pressure of new comers trying to force their way forward from all the openings; but the front ranks were already close-serried and resisted the pressure. Those ranks were ranged around a semicircular barrier in front of the church, and within this barrier were already assembling the Dominican Brethren of San Marco.

But the temporary wooden pulpit erected over the church door was still empty. It was presently to be entered by the man whom the Pope's

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command had banished from the pulpit of the Duomo, whom the other ecclesiastics of Florence had been forbidden to consort with, whom the citizens had been forbidden to hear on pain of excommunication. This man had said, "A wicked, unbelieving Pope who has gained the pontifical chair by bribery is not Christ's Vicar. His curses are broken swords: he grasps a hilt without a blade. His commands are contrary to the Christian life: it is lawful to disobey them—nay, *it is not lawful to obey them.*" And the people still flocked to hear him as he preached in his own church of San Marco, though the Pope was hanging terrible threats over Florence if it did not renounce the pestilential schismatic and send him to Rome to be "converted"—still, as on this very morning, accepted the communion from his excommunicated hands. For how if this Frate had really more command over the Divine lightnings than that official successor of Saint Peter? It was a momentous question, which for the mass of citizens could never be decided by the Frate's ultimate test, namely, what was and what was not accordant with the highest spiritual law. No: in such a case as this, if God had chosen the Frate as his prophet to rebuke the High Priest who carried the mystic raiment unworthily, he would attest his choice by some unmistakable sign. As long as the belief in the Prophet carried no threat of outward calamity, but rather the confident hope of exceptional safety, no sign was needed: his preaching was a music to which the people felt themselves marching along the way they wished to go; but now that belief meant an immediate blow to their commerce, the shaking of their position among the Italian States, and an interdict on their city, there inevitably came the question, "What miracle showest thou?" Slowly at first, then faster and faster, that fatal demand had been swelling in Savonarola's ear, provoking a response, outwardly in the declaration that at the fitting time the miracle would come; inwardly in the faith—not unwavering, for what faith is so?—that if the need for miracle became urgent, the work he had before him was too great for the Divine power to leave it halting. His faith wavered, but not his speech: it is the lot of every man who has to speak for the satisfaction of the crowd, that he must often speak in virtue of yesterday's faith, hoping it will come back to-morrow.

It was in preparation for a scene which was really a response to the popular impatience for some supernatural guarantee of the Prophet's mission that the wooden pulpit had been erected above the church door. But while the ordinary Frati in black mantles were entering and arranging themselves, the faces of the multitude were not yet eagerly directed towards the pulpit: it was felt that Savanarola would not appear just yet, and there was some interest in singling out the various monks, some of them belonging to high Florentine families, many of them having fathers, brothers, or cousins among the artisans and shopkeepers who made the majority of the crowd. It was not till the tale of monks was complete, not till they had fluttered their books and had begun to chant, that people said to each other, "Fra Girolamo must be coming now."

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That expectation rather than any spell from the accustomed wail of psalmody was what made silence and expectation seem to spread like a paling solemn light over the multitude of upturned faces, all now directed towards the empty pulpit.

The next instant the pulpit was no longer empty. A figure covered from head to foot in black cowl and mantle had entered it, and was kneeling with bent head and with face turned away. It seemed a weary time to the eager people while the black figure knelt and the monks chanted. But the stillness was not broken, for the Frate's audiences with Heaven were yet charged with electric awe for that mixed multitude, so that those who had already the will to stone him felt their arms unnerved.

At last there was a vibration among the multitude, each seeming to give his neighbour a momentary aspen-like touch, as when men who have been watching for something in the heavens see the expected presence silently disclosing itself. The Frate had risen, turned towards the people, and partly pushed back his cowl. The monotonous wail of psalmody had ceased, and to those who stood near the pulpit, it was as if the sounds which had just been filling their ears had suddenly merged themselves in the force of Savonarola's flashing glance, as he looked round him in the silence. Then he stretched out his hands, which, in their exquisite delicacy, seemed transfigured from an animal organ for grasping into vehicles of sensibility too acute to need any gross contact: hands that came like an appealing speech from that part of his soul which was masked by his strong passionate face, written on now with deeper lines about the mouth and brow than are made by forty-four years of ordinary life.

At the first stretching out of the hands some of the crowd in the front ranks fell on their knees, and here and there a devout disciple farther off; but the great majority stood firm, some resisting the impulse to kneel before this excommunicated man (might not a great judgment fall upon him even in this act of blessing?)—others jarred with scorn and hatred of the ambitious deceiver who was getting up this new comedy, before which, nevertheless, they felt themselves impotent, as before the triumph of a fashion.

But then came the voice, clear and low at first, uttering the words of absolution—"Misereatur vestri"—and more fell on their knees; and as it rose higher and yet clearer, the erect heads became fewer and fewer, till, at the words "Benedicat vos omnipotens Deus," it rose to a masculine cry, as if protesting its power to bless under the clutch of a demon that wanted to stifle it: it rang like a trumpet to the extremities of the Piazza, and under it every head was bowed.

After the utterance of that blessing Savonarola himself fell on his knees and hid his face in temporary exhaustion. Those great jets of emotion were a necessary part of his life: he himself had said to the people long ago, "Without preaching I cannot live." But it was a life that shattered him.

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In a few minutes more, some had risen to their feet, but a larger number remained kneeling, and all faces were intently watching him. He had taken into his hands a crystal vessel, containing the consecrated Host, and was about to address the people.

"You remember, my children, three days ago I besought you, when I should hold this Sacrament in my hand in the face of you all, to pray fervently to the Most High that if this work of mine does not come from Him, He will send a fire and consume me, that I may vanish into the eternal darkness away from His light which I have hidden with my falsity. Again I beseech you to make that prayer, and to make it *now*."

It was a breathless moment: perhaps no man really prayed, if some in a spirit of devout obedience made the effort to pray. Every consciousness was chiefly possessed by the sense that Savonarola was praying, in a voice not loud but distinctly audible in the wide stillness.

"Lord, if I have not wrought in sincerity of soul, if my word cometh not from Thee, strike me in this moment with Thy thunder, and let the fires of Thy wrath enclose me."

He ceased to speak, and stood motionless, with the consecrated Mystery in his hand, with eyes uplifted and a quivering excitement in his whole aspect. Every one else was motionless and silent too, while the sunlight, which for the last quarter of an hour had here and there been piercing the greyness, made fitful streaks across the convent wall, causing some awe-stricken spectators to start timidly. But soon there was a wider parting, and with a gentle quickness, like a smile, a stream of brightness poured itself on the crystal vase, and then spread itself over Savonarola's face with mild glorification.

An instantaneous shout rang through the Piazza, "Behold the answer!"

The warm radiance thrilled through Savonarola's frame, and so did the shout. It was his last moment of untroubled triumph, and in its rapturous confidence he felt carried to a grander scene yet to come, before an audience that would represent all Christendom, in whose presence he would again be sealed as the messenger of the supreme righteousness, and feel himself full charged with Divine strength. It was but a moment that expanded itself in that prevision. While the shout was still ringing in his ears he turned away within the church, feeling the strain too great for him to bear it longer.

But when the Frate had disappeared, and the sunlight seemed no longer to have anything special in its illumination, but was spreading itself impartially over all things clean and unclean, there began, along with the general movement of the crowd, a confusion of voices in which certain strong discords and varying scales of laughter made it evident that, in the previous silence and universal kneeling, hostility and scorn had only submitted unwillingly to a momentary spell.

"It seems to me the plaudits are giving way to criticism," said Tito, who had been watching the scene attentively from an upper loggia in one of the houses opposite the church. "Nevertheless it was a striking mo-

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ment, eh, Messer Pietro? Fra Girolamo is a man to make one understand that there was a time when the monk's frock was a symbol of power over men's minds rather than over the keys of women's cupboards."

"Assuredly," said Pietro Cennini. "And until I have seen proof that Fra Girolamo has much less faith in God's judgments than the common run of men, instead of having considerably more, I shall not believe that he would brave heaven in this way if his soul were laden with a conscious lie."

CHAPTER LXIII.

Ripening Schemes.

A month after that Carnival, one morning near the end of March, Tito descended the marble steps of the Old Palace, bound on a pregnant errand to San Marco. For some reason, he did not choose to take the direct road, which was but a slightly bent line from the Old Palace; he chose rather to make a circuit by the Piazza di Santa Croce, where the people would be pouring out of the church after the early sermon.

It was in the grand church of Santa Croce that the daily Lenten sermon had of late had the largest audience. For Savonarola's voice had ceased to be heard even in his own church of San Marco, a hostile Signoria having imposed silence on him in obedience to a new letter from the Pope, threatening the city with an immediate interdict if this "wretched worm" and "monstrous idol" were not forbidden to preach, and sent to demand pardon at Rome. And next to hearing Fra Girolamo himself, the most exciting Lenten occupation was to hear him argued against and vilified. This excitement was to be had in Santa Croce, where the Franciscan appointed to preach the Quaresimal sermons had offered to clench his arguments by walking through the fire with Fra Girolamo. Had not that schismatical Dominican said, that his prophetic doctrine would be proved by a miracle at the fitting time? Here, then, was the fitting time. Let Savonarola walk through the fire, and if he came out unhurt, the Divine origin of his doctrine would be demonstrated; but if the fire consumed him, his falsity would be manifest; and that he might have no excuse for evading the test, the Franciscan declared himself willing to be a victim to this high logic, and to be burned for the sake of securing the necessary minor premiss.

Savonarola, according to his habit, had taken no notice of these pulpit attacks. But it happened that the zealous preacher of Santa Croce was no other than the Fra Francesco di Puglia, who at Prato the year before had been engaged in a like challenge with Savonarola's fervent follower Fra Domenico, but had been called home by his superiors while the heat was simply oratorical. Honest Fra Domenico, then, who was preaching Lenten sermons to the women in the Via Cocornero, no sooner heard of

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this new challenge, than he took up the gauntlet for his master and declared himself ready to walk through the fire with Fra Francesco. Already the people were beginning to take a strong interest in what seemed to them a short and easy method of argument (for those who were to be convinced), when Savonarola, keenly alive to the dangers that lay in the mere discussion of the case, commanded Fra Domenico to withdraw his acceptance of the challenge and secede from the affair. The Franciscan declared himself content: he had not directed his challenge to any subaltern, but to Fra Girolamo himself.

After that, the popular interest in the Lenten sermons had flagged a little. But this morning, when Tito entered the Piazza di Santa Croce, he found, as he expected, that the people were pouring from the church in large numbers. Instead of dispersing, many of them concentrated themselves towards a particular spot near the entrance of the Franciscan monastery, and Tito took the same direction, threading the crowd with a careless and leisurely air, but keeping careful watch on that monastic entrance, as if he expected some object of interest to issue from it.

It was no such expectation that occupied the crowd. The object they were caring about was already visible to them in the shape of a large placard, affixed by order of the Signoria, and covered with very legible official handwriting. But curiosity was somewhat baulked by the fact that the manuscript was chiefly in Latin; and though nearly every man knew beforehand approximately what the placard contained, he had an appetite for more exact knowledge, which gave him an irritating sense of his neighbour's ignorance in not being able to interpret the learned tongue. For that aural acquaintance with Latin phrases which the unlearned might pick up from pulpit quotations constantly interpreted by the preacher could help them little when they saw written Latin; the spelling even of the modern language being in an unorganized and scrambling condition for the mass of people who could read and write,* and the majority of those assembled nearest to the placard were not in the dangerous predicament of possessing that little knowledge.

"It's the Frate's doctrines that he's to prove by being burned," said that large public character Goro, who happened to be among the foremost gazers. "The Signoria has taken it in hand, and the writing is to let us know. It's what the Padre has been telling us about in his sermon."

"Nay, Goro," said a sleek shopkeeper, compassionately, "thou hast got thy legs into twisted hose there. The Frate has to prove his doctrines by *not* being burned: he is to walk through the fire, and come out on the other side sound and whole."

"Yes, yes," said a young sculptor, who wore his white-streaked cap and tunic with a jaunty air. "But Fra Girolamo objects to walking

* The old diarists throw in their consonants with a scrupulous regard rather to quantity than position, well typified by the *Ragnolo Braghiello* (Agnnolo Gabriello) of Boccaccio's Ferondo.

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through the fire. Being sound and whole already, he sees no reason why he should walk through the fire to come out in just the same condition. He leaves such odds and ends of work to Fra Domenico."

"Then I say he flinches like a coward," said Goro, in a wheezy treble. "Suffocation! that was what he did at the Carnival. He had us all in the Piazza to see the lightning strike him, and nothing came of it."

"Stop that bleating," said a tall shoemaker, who had stepped in to hear part of the sermon, with bunches of slippers hanging over his shoulders. "It seems to me, friend, that you are about as wise as a calf with water on its brain. The Frate will flinch from nothing: he'll say nothing beforehand, perhaps, but when the moment comes he'll walk through the fire without asking any grey-frock to keep him company. But I would give a shoestring to know what this Latin all is."

"There's so much of it," said the shopkeeper, "else I'm pretty good at guessing. Is there no scholar to be seen?" he added, with a slight expression of disgust.

There was a general turning of heads, which caused the talkers to descry Tito approaching in their rear.

"Here is one," said the young sculptor, smiling and raising his cap.

"It is the secretary of the Ten: he is going to the convent, doubtless; make way for him," said the shopkeeper, also doffing, though that mark of respect was rarely shown by Florentines except to the highest officials. The exceptional reverence was really exacted by the splendour and grace of Tito's appearance, which made his black mantle, with its gold fibula, look like a regal robe, and his ordinary black velvet cap like an entirely exceptional head-dress. The hardening of his cheeks and mouth, which was the chief change in his face since he came to Florence, seemed to a superficial glance only to give his beauty a more masculine character. He raised his own cap immediately and said,

"Thanks, my friend, I merely wished, as you did, to see what is at the foot of this placard—ah, it is as I expected. I had been informed that the government permits any one who will to subscribe his name as a candidate to enter the fire—which is an act of liberality worthy of the magnificent Signoria—reserving of course the right to make a selection. And doubtless many believers will be eager to subscribe their names. For what is it to enter the fire, to one whose faith is firm? A man is afraid of the fire, because he believes it will burn him; but if he believes the contrary?"—here Tito lifted his shoulders and made an oratorical pause—"for which reason I have never been one to disbelieve the Frate, when he has said that he would enter the fire to prove his doctrine. For in his place, if you believed the fire would not burn you, which of you, my friends, would not enter it as readily as you would walk along the dry bed of the Mugnone?"

As Tito looked round him during this appeal, there was a change in some of his audience very much like the change in an eager dog when he is invited to smell something pungent. Since the question of burning

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was becoming practical, it was not every one who would rashly commit himself to any general view of the relation between faith and fire. The scene might have been too much for a gravity less under command than Tito's.

"Then, Messer Segretario," said the young sculptor, "it seems to me Fra Francesco is the greater hero, for he offers to enter the fire for the truth, though he is sure the fire will burn him."

"I do not deny it," said Tito, blandly. "But if it turns out that Fra Francesco is mistaken, he will have been burned for the wrong side, and the Church has never reckoned such as martyrs. We must suspend our judgment until the trial has really taken place."

"It is true, Messer Segretario," said the shopkeeper, with subdued impatience. "But will you favour us by interpreting the Latin?"

"Assuredly," said Tito. "It does but express the conclusions or doctrines which the Frate specially teaches, and which the trial by fire is to prove true or false. They are doubtless familiar to you. First, that Florence——"

"Let us have the Latin bit by bit, and then tell us what it means," said the shoemaker, who had been a frequent hearer of Fra Girolamo.

"Willingly," said Tito, smiling. "You will then judge if I give you the right meaning."

"Yes, yes; that's fair," said Goro.

"*Ecclesia Dei indiget renovatione*, that is, the Church of God needs purifying or regenerating."

"It is true," said several voices at once.

"That means, the priests ought to lead better lives; there needs no miracle to prove that. That's what the Frate has always been saying," said the shoemaker.

"*Flagellabitur*," Tito went on. "That is, it will be scourged. *Renovabitur:* it will be purified. *Florentia quoque post flagella renovabitur et prosperabitur:* Florence also, after the scourging, shall be purified and shall prosper."

"That means, we are to get Pisa again," said the shopkeeper.

"And get the wool from England as we used to do, I should hope," said an elderly man, in an old fashioned berretta, who had been silent till now. "There's been scourging enough with the sinking of the trade."

At this moment, a tall personage, surmounted by a red feather, issued from the door of the convent, and exchanged an indifferent glance with Tito; who, tossing his becchetto carelessly over his left shoulder, turned to his reading again, while the bystanders, with more timidity than respect, shrank to make a passage for Messer Dolfo Spini.

"*Infideles convertentur ad Christum*," Tito went on. "That is, the infidels shall be converted to Christ."

"Those are the Turks and the Moors. Well, I've nothing to say against that," said the shopkeeper, dispassionately.

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"*Hæc autem omnia erunt temporibus nostris*—and all these things shall happen in our times."

"Why, what use would they be, else?" said Goro.

"*Excommunicatio nuper lata contra Reverendum Patrem nostrum Fratrem Hieronymum nulla est*—the excommunication lately pronounced against our reverend father, Fra Girolamo, is null. *Non observantes eam non peccant*—those who disregard it are not committing a sin."

"I shall know better what to say to that when we have had the Trial by Fire," said the shopkeeper.

"Which doubtless will clear up everything," said Tito. "That is all the Latin—all the conclusions that are to be proved true or false by the trial. The rest you can perceive is simply a proclamation of the Signoria in good Tuscan, calling on such as are eager to walk through the fire, to come to the Palazzo and subscribe their names. Can I serve you further? If not——"

Tito, as he turned away, raised his cap and bent slightly, with so easy an air that the movement seemed a natural prompting of deference.

He quickened his pace as he left the Piazza, and after two or three turnings he paused in a quiet street before a door at which he gave a light and peculiar knock. It was opened by a young woman whom he chucked under the chin as he asked her if the Padrone was within, and he then passed, without further ceremony, through another door which stood ajar on his right hand. It admitted him into a handsome but untidy room, where Dolfo Spini sat playing with a fine stag-hound which alternately snuffed at a basket of pups and licked his hands with that affectionate disregard of her master's morals which in the fifteenth century was felt to be one of the most agreeable attributes of her sex. He just looked up as Tito entered, but continued his play, simply from that disposition to persistence in some irrelevant action, by which slow-witted sensual people seem to be continually counteracting their own purposes. Tito was patient.

"A handsome *bracca* that," he said quietly, standing with his thumbs in his belt. Presently he added, in that cool liquid tone which seemed mild, but compelled attention, "When you have finished such caresses as cannot possibly be deferred, my Dolfo, we will talk of business, if you please. My time, which I could wish to be eternity at your service, is not entirely my own this morning."

"Down, Mischief, down!" said Spini, with sudden roughness. "Malediction!" he added, still more gruffly, pushing the dog aside; then, starting from his seat, he stood close to Tito, and put a hand on his shoulder as he spoke.

"I hope your sharp wits see all the ins and outs of this business, my fine necromancer, for it seems to me no clearer than the bottom of a sack."

"What is your difficulty, my cavaliere?"

"These accursed Frati Minori at Santa Croce. They are drawing

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back now. Fra Francesco himself seems afraid of sticking to his challenge; talks of the Prophet being likely to use magic to get up a false miracle—thinks he might be dragged into the fire and burned, and the Prophet might come out whole by magic, and the Church be none the better. And then, after all our talking, there's not so much as a blessed lay brother who will offer himself to pair with that pious sheep Fra Domenico."

"It is the peculiar stupidity of the tonsured skull that prevents them from seeing of how little consequence it is whether they are burned or not," said Tito. "Have you sworn well to them that they shall be in no danger of entering the fire?"

"No," said Spini, looking puzzled; "because one of them will be obliged to go in with Fra Domenico, who thinks it a thousand years till the faggots are ready."

"Not at all. Fra Domenico himself is not likely to go in. I have told you before, my Dolfo, only your powerful mind is not to be impressed without more repetition than suffices for the vulgar—I have told you that now you have got the Signoria to take up this affair and prevent it from being hushed up by Fra Girolamo, nothing is necessary but that on a given day the fuel should be prepared in the Piazza, and the people got together with the expectation of seeing something prodigious. If, after that, the Prophet quits the Piazza without any appearance of a miracle on his side, he is ruined with the people: they will be ready to pelt him out of the city, the Signoria will find it easy to banish him from the territory, and his Holiness may do as he likes with him. Therefore, my Alcibiades, swear to the Franciscans that their grey frocks shall not come within singeing distance of the fire."

Spini rubbed the back of his head with one hand, and tapped his sword against his leg with the other, to stimulate his power of seeing these intangible combinations.

"But," he said presently, looking up again, "unless we fall on him in the Piazza, when the people are in a rage, and make an end of him and his lies then and there, Valori and the Salviati and the Albizzi will take up arms and raise a fight for him. I know that was talked of when there was the hubbub on Ascension Sunday. And the people may turn round again: there may be a story raised of the French king coming again, or some other cursed chance in the hypocrite's favour. The city will never be safe till he's out of it."

"He *will* be out of it before long, without your giving yourself any further trouble than this little comedy of the Trial by Fire. The wine and the sun will make vinegar without any shouting to help them, as your Florentine sages would say. You will have the satisfaction of delivering your city from an incubus by an able stratagem, instead of risking blunders with sword-thrusts."

"But suppose he *did* get magic and the devil to help him, and walk through the fire after all?" said Spini, with a grimace intended to hide

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a certain shyness in trenching on this speculative ground. "How do you know there's nothing in those things? Plenty of scholars believe in them, and this Frate is bad enough for anything."

"Oh, of course there are such things," said Tito, with a shrug; "but I have particular reasons for knowing that the Frate is not on such terms with the devil as can give him any confidence in this affair. The only magic he relies on is his own ability."

"Ability!" said Spini. "Do you call it ability to be setting Florence at loggerheads with the Pope and all the powers of Italy—all to keep beckoning at the French king who never comes? You may call him able, but I call him a hypocrite, who wants to be master of everybody, and get himself made Pope."

"You judge with your usual penetration, my captain, but our opinions do not clash. The Frate, wanting to be master, and to carry out his projects against the Pope, requires the lever of a foreign power, and requires Florence as a fulcrum. I used to think him a narrow-minded bigot, but now I think him a shrewd ambitious man who knows what he is aiming at, and directs his aim as skilfully as you direct a ball when you are playing at *maglio*."

"Yes, yes," said Spini, cordially, "I can aim a ball."

"It is true," said Tito, with bland gravity; "and I should not have troubled you with my trivial remark on the Frate's ability, but that you may see how this will heighten the credit of your success against him at Rome and at Milan, which is sure to serve you in good stead when the city comes to change its policy."

"Well, thou art a good little demon, and shalt have good pay," said Spini, patronizingly; whereupon he thought it only natural that the useful Greek adventurer should smile with gratification as he said,—

"Of course, any advantage to me depends entirely on your——"

"We shall have our supper at my palace to-night," interrupted Spini, with a significant nod and an affectionate pat on Tito's shoulder, "and I shall expound the new scheme to them all."

"Pardon, my magnificent patron," said Tito; "the scheme has been the same from the first—it has never varied except in your memory. Are you sure you have fast hold of it now?"

Spini rehearsed.

"One thing more," he said, as Tito was hastening away. "There is that sharp-nosed notary, Ser Ceccone; he has been handy of late. Tell me, you who can see a man wink when you're behind him, do you think I may go on making use of him?"

Tito dared not say "no." He knew his companion too well to trust him with advice when all Spini's vanity and self-interest were not engaged in concealing the adviser.

"Doubtless," he answered, promptly. "I have nothing to say against Ceccone."

That suggestion of the notary's intimate access to Spini caused Tito a

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passing twinge, interrupting his amused satisfaction in the success with which he made a tool of the man who fancied himself a patron. For he had been rather afraid of Ser Ceccone. Tito's nature made him peculiarly alive to circumstances that might be turned to his disadvantage; his memory was much haunted by such possibilities, stimulating him to contrivances by which he might ward them off. And it was not likely that he should forget that October morning more than a year ago, when Romola had appeared suddenly before him at the door of Nello's shop, and had compelled him to declare his certainty that Fra Girolamo was not going outside the gates. The fact that Ser Ceccone had been a witness of that scene, together with Tito's perception that for some reason or other he was an object of dislike to the notary, had received a new importance from the recent turn of events. For after having been implicated in the Medicean plots, and found it advisable in consequence to retire into the country for some time, Ser Ceccone had of late, since his reappearance in the city, attached himself to the Arrabbiati, and cultivated the patronage of Dolfo Spini. Now that captain of the Compagnacci was much given, when in the company of intimates, to confidential narrative about his own doings, and if Ser Ceccone's powers of combination were sharpened by enmity, he might gather some knowledge which he could use against Tito with very unpleasant results.

It would be pitiable to be baulked in well-conducted schemes by an insignificant notary; to be lamed by the sting of an insect whom he had offended unawares. "But," Tito said to himself, "the man's dislike to me can be nothing deeper than the ill-humour of a dinnerless dog; I shall conquer it if I can make him prosperous." And he had been very glad of an opportunity which had presented itself of providing the notary with a temporary post as an extra *cancelliere* or registering secretary under the Ten, believing that with this sop and the expectation of more, the waspish cur must be quite cured of the disposition to bite him.

But perfect scheming demands omniscience, and the notary's envy had been stimulated into hatred by causes of which Tito knew nothing. That evening when Tito, returning from his critical audience with the Special Council, had brushed by Ser Ceccone on the stairs, the notary, who had only just returned from Pistoja, and learned the arrest of the conspirators, was bound on an errand which bore a humble resemblance to Tito's. He also, without giving up a show of popular zeal, had been putting in the Medicean lottery. He also had been privy to the unexecuted plot, and was willing to tell what he knew, but knew much less to tell. He also would have been willing to go on treacherous errands, but a more eligible agent had forestalled him. His propositions were received coldly; the council, he was told, was already in possession of the needed information, and since he had been thus busy in sedition, it would be well for him to retire out of the way of mischief, otherwise the government might be obliged to take note of him. Ser Ceccone wanted no evidence to make him attribute his failure to Tito, and his spite was the more

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bitter because the nature of the case compelled him to hold his peace about it. Nor was this the whole of his grudge against the flourishing Melema. On issuing from his hiding-place, and attaching himself to the Arrabbiati, he had earned some pay as one of the spies who reported information on Florentine affairs to the Milanese court; but his pay had been small, notwithstanding his pains to write full letters, and he had lately been apprised that his news was seldom more than a late and imperfect edition of what was known already. Now Ser Ceccone had no positive knowledge that Tito had an underhand connection with the Arrabbiati and the Court of Milan, but he had a suspicion of which he chewed the cud with as strong a sense of flavour as if it had been a certainty.

This fine-grown vigorous hatred could swallow the feeble opiate of Tito's favours, and be as lively as ever after it. Why should Ser Ceccone like Melema any the better for doing him favours? Doubtless the suave secretary had his own ends to serve; and what right had he to the superior position which made it possible for him to show favour? But since he had tuned his voice to flattery, Ser Ceccone would pitch his in the same key, and it remained to be seen who would win at the game of outwitting.

To have a mind well oiled with that sort of argument which prevents any claim from grasping it, seems eminently convenient sometimes; only the oil becomes objectionable when we find it anointing other minds on which we want to establish a hold.

Tito, however, not being quite omniscient, felt now no more than a passing twinge of uneasiness at the suggestion of Ser Ceccone's power to hurt him. It was only for a little while that he cared greatly about keeping clear of suspicions and hostility. He was now playing his final game in Florence, and the skill he was conscious of applying gave him a pleasure in it even apart from the expected winnings. The errand on which he was bent to San Marco was a stroke in which he felt so much confidence that he had already given notice to the Ten of his desire to resign his office at an indefinite period within the next month or two, and had obtained permission to make that resignation suddenly, if his affairs needed it, with the understanding that Niccolò Macchiavelli was to be his provisional substitute, if not his successor. He was acting on hypothetic grounds, but this was the sort of action that had the keenest interest for his diplomatic mind. From a combination of general knowledge concerning Savonarola's purposes with diligently observed details he had framed a conjecture which he was about to verify by this visit to San Marco. If he proved to be right, his game would be won, and he might soon turn his back on Florence. He looked eagerly towards that consummation, for many circumstances besides his own weariness of the place told him that it was time for him to be gone.

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CHAPTER LXIV.

The Prophet in his Cell.

Tito's visit to San Marco had been announced beforehand, and he was at once conducted by Fra Niccolò, Savonarola's secretary, up the spiral staircase into the long corridors lined with cells—corridors where Fra Angelico's frescoes, delicate as the rainbow on the melting cloud, startled the unaccustomed eye here and there, as if they had been sudden reflections cast from an ethereal world, where the Madonna sat crowned in her radiant glory, and the divine infant looked forth with perpetual promise.

It was an hour of relaxation in the monastery, and most of the cells were empty. The light through the narrow windows looked in on nothing but bare walls, and the hard pallet, and the crucifix. And even behind that door at the end of a long corridor, in the inner cell opening from an ante-chamber where the Prior usually sat at his desk or received private visitors, the high jet of light fell on only one more object that looked quite as common a monastic sight as the bare walls and hard pallet. It was but the back of a figure in the long white Dominican tunic and scapulary, kneeling with bowed head before a crucifix. It might have been any ordinary Fra Girolamo, who had nothing worse to confess than thinking of wrong things when he was singing *in coro*, or feeling a spiteful joy when Fra Benedetto dropped the ink over his own miniatures in the breviary he was illuminating—who had no higher thought than that of climbing safely into paradise up the narrow ladder of prayer, fasting, and obedience. But under this particular white tunic there was a heart beating with a consciousness inconceivable to the average monk, and perhaps hard to be conceived by any man who has not arrived at self-knowledge through a tumultuous inner life: a consciousness in which irrevocable errors and lapses from veracity were so entwined with noble purposes and sincere beliefs, in which self-justifying expediency was so inwoven with the tissue of a great work which the whole being seemed as unable to abandon as the body was unable to abandon glowing and trembling before the objects of hope and fear, that it was perhaps impossible, whatever course might be adopted, for the conscience to find perfect repose.

Savonarola was not only in the attitude of prayer, there were Latin words of prayer on his lips, and yet he was not praying. He had entered his cell, had fallen on his knees, and burst into words of supplication, seeking in this way for an influx of calmness which would be a warrant to him that the resolutions urged on him by crowding thoughts and passions were not wresting him away from the Divine support; but the previsions and impulses which had been at work within him for the last hour were too imperious; and while he pressed his hands against his face, and while his lips were uttering audibly, "Cor mundum crea in me," his

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mind was still filled with the images of the snare his enemies had prepared for him, was still busy with the arguments by which he could justify himself against their taunts and accusations.

And it was not only against his opponents that Savonarola had to defend himself. This morning he had had new proof that his friends and followers were as much inclined to urge on the trial by fire as his enemies; desiring and tacitly expecting that he himself would at last accept the challenge and evoke the long-expected miracle which was to dissipate doubt and triumph over malignity. Had he not said that God would declare Himself at the fitting time? And to the understanding of plain Florentines, eager to get party questions settled, it seemed that no time could be more fitting than this. Certainly, if Fra Domenico walked through the fire unhurt, *that* would be a miracle, and the faith and ardour of that good brother were felt to be a cheering augury; but Savonarola was acutely conscious that the secret longing of his followers to see him accept the challenge had not been dissipated by any reasons he had given for his refusal.

Yet it was impossible to him to satisfy them; and with bitter distress he saw now that it was impossible for him any longer to resist the prosecution of the trial in Fra Domenico's case. Not that Savonarola had uttered and written a falsity when he declared his belief in a future supernatural attestation of his work; but his mind was so constituted that while it was easy for him to believe in a miracle which, being distant and undefined, was screened behind the strong reasons he saw for its occurrence, and yet easier for him to have a belief in inward miracles such as his own prophetic inspiration and divinely wrought intuitions; it was at the same time insurmountably difficult to him to believe in the probability of a miracle which, like this of being carried unhurt through the fire, pressed in all its details on his imagination and involved a demand not only for belief but for exceptional action.

Savonarola's nature was one of those in which opposing tendencies co-exist in almost equal strength: the passionate sensibility which, impatient of definite thought, floods every idea with emotion and tends towards contemplative ecstasy, alternated in him with a keen perception of outward facts and a vigorous practical judgment of men and things. And in this case of the Trial by Fire, the latter characteristics were stimulated into unusual activity by an acute physical sensitiveness which gives overpowering force to the conception of pain and destruction as a necessary sequence of facts which have already been experienced as causes of pain. The readiness with which men will consent to touch red-hot iron with a wet finger is not to be measured by their theoretic acceptance of the impossibility that the iron will burn them: practical belief depends on what is most strongly represented in the mind at a given moment. And with the Frate's constitution, when the Trial by Fire was urged on his imagination as an immediate demand, it was impossible for him to believe that he or any other man could walk through the flames unhurt—impos-

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sible for him to believe that even if he resolved to offer himself, he would not shrink at the last moment.

But the Florentines were not likely to make these fine distinctions. To the common run of mankind it has always seemed a proof of mental vigour to find moral questions easy, and judge conduct according to concise alteratives. And nothing was likely to seem plainer than that a man who at one time declared that God would not leave him without the guarantee of a miracle, and yet drew back when it was proposed to test his declaration, had said what he did not believe. Were not Fra Domenico and Fra Mariano, and scores of Piagnoni besides, ready to enter the fire? What was the cause of their superior courage, if it was not their superior faith? Savonarola could not have explained his conduct satisfactorily to his friends, even if he had been able to explain it thoroughly to himself. And he was not. Our naked feelings make haste to clothe themselves in propositions which lie at hand among our store of opinions, and to give a true account of what passes within us something else is necessary besides sincerity, even when sincerity is unmixed. In these very moments, when Savonarola was kneeling in audible prayer, he had ceased to hear the words on his lips. They were drowned by argumentative voices within him that shaped their reasons more and more for an outward audience.

"To appeal to heaven for a miracle by a rash acceptance of a challenge, which is a mere snare prepared for me by ignoble foes, would be a tempting of God, and the appeal would not be responded to. Let the Pope's legate come, let the ambassadors of all the great Powers come and promise that the calling of a General Council and the reform of the Church shall hang on the miracle, and I will enter the flames, trusting that God will not withhold His seal from that great work. Until then I reserve myself for higher duties which are directly laid upon me: it is not permitted to me to leap from the chariot for the sake of wrestling with every loud vaunter. But Fra Domenico's invincible zeal to enter into the trial may be the sign of a Divine vocation, may be a pledge that the miracle——"

But no! when Savonarola brought his mind close to the threatened scene in the Piazza, and imagined a human body entering the fire, his belief recoiled again. It was not an event that his imagination could simply see: he felt it with shuddering vibrations to the extremities of his sensitive fingers. The miracle could not be. Nay, the trial itself was not to happen: he was warranted in doing all in his power to hinder it. The fuel might be got ready in the Piazza, the people might be assembled, the preparatory formalities might be gone through: all this was perhaps inevitable now, and he could no longer resist it without bringing dishonour on—himself? Yes, and therefore on the cause of God. But it was not really intended that the Franciscan should enter the fire, and while *he* hung back there would be the means of preventing Fra Domenico's entrance. At the very worst, if Fra Domenico were com-

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pelled to enter, he should carry the consecrated Host with him, and with that Mystery in his hand, there might be a warrant for expecting that the ordinary effects of fire would be stayed ; or, more probably, this demand would be resisted, and might thus be a final obstacle to the trial.

But these intentions could not be avowed: he must appear frankly to await the trial, and to trust in its issue. That dissidence between inward reality and outward seeming was not the Christian simplicity after which he had striven through years of his youth and prime, and which he had preached as a chief fruit of the Divine life. In the stress and heat of the day, with cheeks burning, with shouts ringing in the ears, who is so blest as to remember the yearnings he had in the cool and silent morning, and know that he has not belied them?

"O God, it is for the sake of the people—because they are blind—because their faith depends on me. If I put on sackcloth and cast myself among the ashes, who will take up the standard and head the battle? Have I not been led by a way which I knew not to the work that lies before me?"

The conflict was one that could not end, and in the effort at prayerful pleading the uneasy mind laved its smart continually in thoughts of the greatness of that task which there was no man else to fulfil if he forsook it. It was not a thing of every day that a man should be inspired with the vision and the daring that made a sacred rebel.

Even the words of prayer had died away. He continued to kneel, but his mind was filled with the images of results to be felt through all Europe; and the sense of immediate difficulties was being lost in the glow of that vision, when the knocking at the door announced the expected visit.

Savonarola drew on his mantle before he left his cell, as was his custom when he received visitors; and with that immediate response to any appeal from without which belongs to a power-loving nature accustomed to make its power felt by speech, he met Tito with a glance as self-possessed and strong as if he had risen from resolution instead of conflict.

Tito did not kneel, but simply made a greeting of profound deference, which Savonarola received quietly without any sacerdotal words, and then desiring him to be seated, said at once,

"Your business is something of weight, my son, that could not be conveyed through others?"

"Assuredly, father, else I should not have presumed to ask it. I will not trespass on your time by any proem. I gathered from a remark of Messer Domenico Mazzinghi that you might be glad to make use of the next special courier who is sent to France with despatches from the Ten. I must intreat you to pardon me if I have been too officious; but inasmuch as Messer Domenico is at this moment away at his villa, I wished to apprise you that a courier carrying important letters is about to depart for Lyons at daybreak to-morrow.

The muscles of Fra Girolamo's face were eminently under command, as must be the case with all men whose personality is powerful, and in

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deliberate speech he was habitually cautious, confiding his intentions to none without necessity. But under any strong mental stimulus, his eyes were liable to a dilation and added brilliancy that no strength of will could control. He looked steadily at Tito, and did not answer immediately, as if he had to consider whether the information he had just heard met any purpose of his.

Tito, whose glance never seemed observant, but rarely let anything escape it, had expected precisely that dilation and flash of Savonarola's eyes which he had noted on other occasions. He saw it, and then immediately busied himself in adjusting his gold fibula, which had got wrong; seeming to imply that he awaited an answer patiently.

The fact was that Savonarola had expected to receive this intimation from Domenico Mazzinghi, one of the Ten, an ardent disciple of his whom he had already employed to write a private letter to the Florentine ambassador in France, to prepare the way for a letter to the French king himself in Savonarola's handwriting, which now lay ready in the desk at his side. It was a letter calling on the king to assist in summoning a General Council, that might reform the abuses of the Church, and begin by deposing Pope Alexander, who was not rightfully Pope, being a vicious unbeliever, elected by corruption, and governing by simony.

This fact was not what Tito knew, but what his hypothetic talent, constructing from subtle indications, had led him to guess and hope.

"It is true, my son," said Savonarola, quietly. "It is true I have letters which I would gladly send by safe conveyance under cover to our ambassador. Our community of San Marco, as you know, has affairs in France, being, amongst other things, responsible for a debt to that singularly wise and experienced Frenchman, Signor Philippe de Comines, on the library of the Medici, which we purchased; but I apprehend that Domenico Mazzinghi himself may return to the city before evening, and I should gain more time for preparation of the letters if I waited to deposit them in his hands."

"Assuredly, reverend father, that might be better on all grounds except one, namely, that if anything occurred to hinder Messer Domenico's return, the despatch of the letters would require either that I should come to San Marco again at a late hour, or that you should send them to me by your secretary; and I am aware that you wish to guard against the false inferences which might be drawn from a too frequent communication between yourself and any officer of the government." In throwing out this difficulty Tito felt that the more unwillingness the Frate showed to trust him, the more certain he would be of his conjecture.

Savonarola was silent; but while he kept his mouth firm, a slight glow rose in his face with the suppressed excitement that was growing within him. It would be a critical moment—that in which he delivered the letter out of his own hands.

"It is most probable that Messer Domenico will return in time," said Tito, affecting to consider the Frate's determination settled, and rising from

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his chair as he spoke. "With your permission, I will take my leave, father, not to trespass on your time when my errand is done; but as I may not be favoured with another interview, I venture to confide to you what is not yet known to others except to the magnificent Ten, that I contemplate resigning my secretaryship, and leaving Florence shortly. Am I presuming too much on your interest in stating what relates chiefly to myself?"

"Speak on, my son," said the Frate; "I desire to know your prospects."

"I find, then, that I have mistaken my real vocation in forsaking the career of pure letters, for which I was brought up. The politics of Florence, father, are worthy to occupy the greatest mind—to occupy yours—when a man is in a position to execute his own ideas; but when, like me, he can only hope to be the mere instrument of changing schemes, he requires to be animated by the minor attachments of a born Florentine: also, my wife's unhappy alienation from a Florentine residence since the painful events of August naturally influences me. I wish to join her."

Savonarola inclined his head approvingly.

"I intend, then, soon to leave Florence, to visit the chief courts of Europe, and to widen my acquaintance with the men of letters in the various universities. I shall go first to the court of Hungary, where scholars are eminently welcome; and I shall probably start in a week or ten days. I have not concealed from you, father, that I am no religious enthusiast; I have not my wife's ardour; but religious enthusiasm, as I conceive, is not necessary in order to appreciate the grandeur and justice of your views concerning the government of nations and the Church. And if you condescend to intrust me with any commission that will further the relations you wish to establish, I shall feel honoured. May I now take my leave?"

"Stay, my son. When you depart from Florence I will send a letter to your wife, of whose spiritual welfare I would fain be assured, for she left me in anger. As for the letters to France, such as I have ready——"

Savonarola rose and turned to his desk as he spoke. He took from it a letter on which Tito could see, but not read, an address in the Frate's own minute and exquisite handwriting, still to be seen covering the margins of his Bibles. He took a large sheet of paper, enclosed the letter, and sealed it.

"Pardon me, father," said Tito, before Savonarola had time to speak, "unless it were your decided wish, I would rather not incur the responsibility of carrying away the letter. Messer Domenico Mazzinghi will doubtless return, or, if not, Fra Niccolò can convey it to me at the second hour of the evening, when I shall place the other despatches in the courier's hands."

"At present, my son," said the Frate, waiving that point, "I wish you to address this packet to our ambassador in your own handwriting, which is preferable to my secretary's."

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Tito sat down to write the address while the Frate stood by him with folded arms, the glow mounting in his cheek, and his lip at last quivering. Tito rose and was about to move away, when Savonarola said abruptly,

"Take it, my son. There is no use in waiting. It does not please me that Fra Niccolò should have needless errands to the Palazzo."

As Tito took the letter, Savonarola stood in suppressed excitement that forbade further speech. There seems to be a subtle emanation from passionate natures like his, making their mental states tell immediately on others; when they are absent-minded and inwardly excited there is silence in the air.

Tito made a deep reverence and went out with the letter under his mantle.

The letter was duly delivered to the courier and carried out of Florence. But before that happened another messenger, privately employed by Tito, had conveyed information in cipher, which was carried by a series of relays to armed agents of Ludovico Sforza, Duke of Milan, on the watch for the very purpose of intercepting despatches on the borders of the Milanese territory.

CHAPTER LXV.

The Trial by Fire.

Little more than a week after, on the seventh of April, the great Piazza della Signoria presented a stranger spectacle even than the famous Bonfire of Vanities. And a greater multitude had assembled to see it than had ever before tried to find place for themselves in the wide Piazza, even on the day of San Giovanni.

It was near mid-day, and since the early morning there had been a gradual swarming of the people at every coign of vantage or disadvantage offered by the façades and roofs of the houses, and such spaces of the pavement as were free to the public. Men were seated on iron rods that made a sharp angle with the rising wall, were clutching slim pillars with arms and legs, were astride on the necks of the rough statuary that here and there surmounted the entrances of the grander houses, were finding a palm's breadth of seat on a bit of architrave, and a footing on the rough projections of the rustic stone-work, while they clutched the strong iron rings or staples driven into the walls beside them.

For they were come to see a Miracle: cramped limbs and abraded flesh seemed slight inconveniences with that prospect close at hand. It is the ordinary lot of mankind to hear of miracles, and more or less believe in them; but now the Florentines were going to see one. At the very least they would see half a miracle; for if the monk did not come whole out of the fire, they would see him enter it, and infer that he was burned in the middle.

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There could be no reasonable doubt, it seemed, that the fire would be kindled, and that the monks would enter it. For there, before their eyes, was the long platform, eight feet broad, and twenty yards long, with a grove of fuel heaped up terribly, great branches of dry oak as a foundation, crackling thorns above, and well-anointed tow and rags, known to make fine flames in Florentine illuminations. The platform began at the corner of the marble terrace in front of the old palace, close to Marzocco, the stone lion, whose aged visage looked frowningly along the grove of fuel that stretched obliquely across the Piazza.

Besides that, there were three large bodies of armed men: five hundred hired soldiers of the Signoria stationed before the palace, five hundred Compagnacci under Dolfo Spini, far off on the opposite side of the Piazza, and three hundred armed citizens of another sort, under Marco Salviati, Savonarola's friend, in front of Orcagna's Loggia, where the Franciscans and Dominicans were to be placed with their champions.

Here had been much expense of money and labour, and high dignities were concerned. There could be no reasonable doubt that something great was about to happen; and it would certainly be a great thing if the two monks were simply burned, for in that case too God would have spoken, and said very plainly that Fra Girolamo was not his prophet.

And there was not much longer to wait, for it was now near mid-day. Half the monks were already at their post, and that half of the Loggia that lies towards the Palace was already filled with grey mantles; but the other half, divided off by boards, was still empty of everything except a small altar. The Franciscans had entered and taken their places in silence. But now, at the other side of the Piazza was heard loud chanting from two hundred voices, and there was general satisfaction, if not in the chanting, at least in the evidence that the Dominicans were come. That loud chanting repetition of the prayer, "Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered," was unpleasantly suggestive to some impartial ears of a desire to vaunt confidence and excite dismay; and so was the flame-coloured velvet cope in which Fra Domenico was arrayed as he headed the procession, cross in hand, his simple mind really exalted with faith, and with the genuine intention to enter the flames for the glory of God and Fra Girolamo. Behind him came Savonarola in the white vestment of a priest, carrying in his hands a vessel containing the consecrated Host. He too was chanting loudly, he too looked firm and confident, and as all eyes were turned eagerly on him either in anxiety, curiosity or malignity, from the moment when he entered the Piazza till he mounted the steps of the Loggia and deposited the Sacrament on the altar, there was an intensifying flash and energy in his countenance responding to that scrutiny.

We are so made, almost all of us, that the false seeming which we have thought of with painful shrinking when beforehand in our solitude it has urged itself on us as a necessity, will possess our muscles and move our lips as if nothing but that were easy when once we have come under

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the stimulus of expectant eyes and ears. And the strength of that stimulus to Savonarola can hardly be measured by the experience of ordinary lives. Perhaps no man has ever had a mighty influence over his fellows without having the innate need to dominate, and this need usually becomes the more imperious in proportion as the complications of life make self inseparable from a purpose which is not selfish. In this way it came to pass that on the day of the Trial by Fire, the doubleness which is the pressing temptation in every public career, whether of priest, orator, or statesman, was more strongly defined in Savonarola's consciousness as the acting of a part, than at any other period in his life. He was struggling not against impending martyrdom, but against impending ruin.

Therefore he looked and acted as if he were thoroughly confident, when all the while foreboding was pressing with leaden weight on his heart, not only because of the probable issues of this trial, but because of another event already past—an event which was spreading a sunny satisfaction through the mind of a man who was looking down at the passion-worn prophet from a window of the Old Palace. It was a common turning-point towards which those widely sundered lives had been converging, that two evenings ago the news had come that the Florentine courier of the Ten had been arrested and robbed of all his despatches, so that Savonarola's letter was already in the hands of the Duke of Milan, and would soon be in the hands of the Pope, not only heightening rage but giving a new justification to extreme measures. There was no malignity in Tito Melema's satisfaction: it was the mild self-gratulation of a man who has won a game that has employed hypothetic skill, not a game that has stirred the muscles and heated the blood. Of course that bundle of desires and contrivances called human nature, when moulded into the form of a plain-featured Frate Predicatore, more or less of an impostor, could not be a pathetic object to a brilliant-minded scholar who understood everything. Yet this tonsured Girolamo with the high nose and large under lip was an immensely clever Frate, mixing with his absurd superstitions or fabrications very remarkable notions about government: no babbler, but a man who could keep his secrets. Tito had no more spite against him than against Saint Dominic. On the contrary, Fra Girolamo's existence had been highly convenient to Tito Melema, furnishing him with that round of the ladder from which he was about to leap on to a new and smooth footing very much to his heart's content. And everything now was in forward preparation for that leap: let one more sun rise and set, and Tito hoped to quit Florence. He had been so industrious that he felt at full leisure to amuse himself with to-day's comedy, which the thick-headed Dolfo Spini could never have brought about but for him.

Not yet did the loud chanting cease, but rather swelled to a deafening roar, being taken up in all parts of the Piazza by the Piagnoni, who carried their little red crosses as a badge and, most of them, chanted the prayer for the confusion of God's enemies with the expectation of an answer to be given through the medium of a more signal personage than

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Fra Domenico. This good Frate in his flame-coloured cope was now kneeling before the little altar on which the Sacrament was deposited, awaiting his summons.

On the Franciscan side of the Loggia there was no chanting and no flame-colour: only silence and greyness. But there was this counterbalancing difference, that the Franciscans had two champions: a certain Fra Giuliano was to pair with Fra Domenico, while the original champion, Fra Francesco, confined his challenge to Savonarola.

"Surely," thought the men perched uneasily on rods and pillars, "all must be ready now. This chanting might stop, and we should see better when the Frati are moving towards the platform."

But the Frati were not to be seen moving yet. Pale Franciscan faces were looking uneasily over the boarding at that flame-coloured cope. It had an evil look and might be enchanted, so that a false miracle would be wrought by magic. Your monk may come whole out of the fire, and yet it may be the work of the devil.

And now there was passing to and fro between the Loggia and the marble terrace of the Palazzo, and the roar of chanting became a little quieter, for every one at a distance was beginning to watch more eagerly. But it soon appeared that the new movement was not a beginning, but an obstacle to beginning. The dignified Florentines appointed to preside over this affair as moderators on each side, went in and out of the Palace, and there was much debate with the Franciscans. But at last it was clear that Fra Domenico, conspicuous in his flame-colour, was being fetched towards the Palace. Probably the fire had already been kindled—it was difficult to see at a distance—and the miracle was going to begin.

Not at all. The flame-coloured cope disappeared within the Palace; then another Dominican was fetched away; and for a long while every thing went on as before—the tiresome chanting, which was not miraculous, and Fra Girolamo in his white vestment standing just in the same place. But at last something happened: Fra Domenico was seen coming out of the Palace again, and returning to his brethren. He had changed all his clothes with a brother monk, but he was guarded on each flank by a Franciscan, lest coming into the vicinity of Savonarola he should be enchanted again.

"Ah, then," thought the distant spectators, a little less conscious of cramped limbs and hunger, "Fra Domenico is not going to enter the fire. It is Fra Girolamo who offers himself after all. We shall see him move presently, and if he comes out of the flames we shall have a fine view of him!"

But Fra Girolamo did not move, except with the ordinary action accompanying speech. The speech was bold and firm, perhaps somewhat ironically remonstrant, like that of Elijah to the priests of Baal, demanding the cessation of these trivial delays. But speech is the most irritating kind of argument for those who are out of hearing, cramped in the limbs, and empty in the stomach. And what need was there for speech? If

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the miracle did not begin, it could be no one's fault but Fra Girolamo's, who might put an end to all difficulties by offering himself now the fire was ready, as he had been forward enough to do when there was no fuel in sight.

More movement to and fro, more discussion; and the afternoon seemed to be slipping away all the faster because the clouds had gathered, and changed the light on everything, and sent a chill through the spectators, hungry in mind and body.

Now it was the crucifix which Fra Domenico wanted to carry into the fire and must not be allowed to profane in that manner. After some little resistance Savonarola gave way to this objection, and thus had the advantage of making one more concession; but he immediately placed in Fra Domenico's hands the vessel containing the consecrated Host. The idea that the presence of the sacred mystery might in the worst extremity avert the ordinary effects of fire hovered in his mind as a possibility; but the issue on which he counted was of a more positive kind. In taking up the Host he said quietly, as if he were only doing what had been presupposed from the first,

"Since they are not willing that you should enter with the crucifix, my brother, enter simply with the Sacrament."

New horror in the Franciscans; new firmness in Savonarola. "It was impious presumption to carry the Sacrament into the fire: if it were burned the scandal would be great in the minds of the weak and ignorant." "Not at all: even if it were burned, the Accidents only would be consumed, the Substance would remain." Here was a question that might be argued till set of sun and remain as elastic as ever; and no one could propose settling it by proceeding to the trial, since it was essentially a preliminary question. It was only necessary that both sides should remain firm—that the Franciscans should persist in not permitting the Host to be carried into the fire, and that Fra Domenico should persist in refusing to enter without it.

Meanwhile the clouds were getting darker, the air chiller. Even the chanting was missed now it had given way to inaudible argument; and the confused sounds of talk from all points of the Piazza, showing that expectation was everywhere relaxing, contributed to the irritating presentiment that nothing decisive would be done. Here and there a dropping shout was heard; then, more frequent shouts in a rising scale of scorn.

"Light the fire and drive them in!" "Let us have a smell of roast—we want our dinner!" "Come, Prophet, let us know whether anything is to happen before the twenty-four hours are over!" "Yes, yes, what's your last vision?" "Oh, he's got a dozen in his inside; they're the small change for a miracle!" "Olà, Frate, where are you? Never mind wasting the fuel!"

Still the same movement to and fro between the Loggia and the Palace; still the same debate, slow and unintelligible to the multitude as the colloquies of insects that touch antennæ to no other apparent effect

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than that of going and coming. But an interpretation was not long wanting to unheard debates in which Fra Girolamo was constantly a speaker: it was he who was hindering the trial; everybody was appealing to him now, and he was hanging back.

Soon the shouts ceased to be distinguishable, and were lost in an uproar not simply of voices, but of clashing metal and trampling feet. The suggestions of the irritated people had stimulated old impulses in Dolfo Spini and his band of Compagnacci; it seemed an opportunity not to be lost for putting an end to Florentine difficulties by getting possession of the arch-hypocrite's person; and there was a vigorous rush of the armed men towards the Loggia, thrusting the people aside, or driving them on to the file of soldiery stationed in front of the palace. At this movement, everything was suspended both with monks and embarrassed magistrates except the palpitating watch to see what would come of the struggle.

But the Loggia was well guarded by the band under the brave Salviati; the soldiers of the Signoria assisted in the repulse; and the trampling and rushing were all backward again towards the Tetto de' Pisani, when the blackness of the heavens seemed to intensify in this moment of utter confusion, and the rain, which had already been felt in scattered drops, began to fall with rapidly growing violence, wetting the fuel, and running in streams off the platform, wetting the weary, hungry people to the skin, and driving every man's disgust and rage inwards to ferment there in the damp darkness.

Everybody knew now that the trial by fire was not to happen. The Signoria was doubtless glad of the rain, as an obvious reason, better than any pretext, for declaring that both parties might go home. It was the issue which Savonarola had expected and desired; yet it would be an ill description of what he felt to say that he was glad. As that rain fell, and plashed on the edge of the Loggia, and sent spray over the altar and all garments and faces, the Frate knew that the demand for him or his to enter the fire was at an end. But he knew too, with a certainty as irresistible as the damp chill that had taken possession of his frame, that the design of his enemies was fulfilled, and that his honour was not saved. He knew that he should have to make his way to San Marco again through the enraged crowd, and that the hearts of many friends who would once have defended him with their lives would now be turned against him.

When the rain had ceased he asked for a guard from the Signoria, and it was given him. Had he said that he was willing to die for the work of his life? Yes, and he had not spoken falsely. But to die in dishonour —held up to scorn as a hypocrite and a false prophet? "O God! *that* is not martyrdom! It is the blotting out of a life that has been a protest against wrong. Let me die because of the worth that is in me, not because of my weakness."

The rain had ceased, and the light from the breaking clouds fell on

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Savonarola as he left the Loggia in the midst of his guard, walking, as he had come, with the Sacrament in his hand. But there seemed no glory in the light that fell on him now, no smile of heaven: it was only that light which shines on, patiently and impartially, justifying or condemning by simply showing all things in the slow history of their ripening. He heard no blessing, no tones of pity, but only taunts and threats. He knew this was but a foretaste of coming bitterness; yet his courage mounted under all moral attack, and he showed no sign of dismay.

"Well parried, Frate!" said Tito, as Savonarola descended the steps of the Loggia. "But I fear your career at Florence is ended. What say you, my Niccolò?"

"It is a pity his falsehoods were not all of a wise sort," said Macchiavelli, with a melancholy shrug. "With the times so much on his side as they are about church affairs, he might have done something great."

CHAPTER LXVI.

A Masque of the Furies.

The next day was Palm Sunday, or Olive Sunday, as it was chiefly called in the olive-growing Valdarno; and the morning sun shone with a more delicious clearness for the yesterday's rain. Once more Savonarola mounted the pulpit in San Marco, and saw a flock around him whose faith in him was still unshaken; and this morning in calm and sad sincerity he declared himself ready to die: in the front of all visions he saw his own doom. Once more he uttered the benediction, and saw the faces of men and women lifted towards him in venerating love. Then he descended the steps of the pulpit and turned away from that sight for ever.

For before the sun had set Florence was in an uproar. The passions which had been roused the day before had been smouldering through that quiet morning, and had now burst out again with a fury not unassisted by design, and not without official connivance. The uproar had begun at the Duomo in an attempt of some Compagnacci to hinder the evening sermon, which the Piagnoni had assembled to hear. But no sooner had men's blood mounted and the disturbances had become an affray than the cry arose, "To San Marco! the fire to San Marco!"

And long before the daylight had died, both the church and convent were being besieged by an enraged and continually increasing multitude. Not without resistance; for the monks, long conscious of growing hostility without, had arms within their walls, and some of them fought as vigorously in their long white tunics as if they had been Knights Templars. Even the command of Savonarola could not prevail against the impulse to self-defence in arms that were still muscular under the Dominican serge. There were laymen too who had not chosen to depart, and some of them fought fiercely: there was firing from the high altar close by the great

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crucifix, there was pouring of stones and hot embers from the convent roof, there was close fighting with swords in the cloisters. Notwithstanding the force of the assailants, the attack lasted till deep night.

The demonstrations of the Government had all been against the convent; early in the attack guards had been sent, not to disperse the assailants, but to command all within the convent to lay down their arms, all laymen to depart from it, and Savonarola himself to quit the Florentine territory within twelve hours. Had Savonarola quitted the convent then, he could hardly have escaped being torn to pieces; he was willing to go, but his friends hindered him. It was felt to be a great risk even for some laymen of high name to depart by the garden wall, but among those who had chosen to do so was Francesco Valori, who hoped to raise rescue from without.

And now when it was deep night—when the struggle could hardly have lasted much longer, and the Compagnacci might soon have carried their swords into the library, where Savonarola was praying with the Brethren who had either not taken up arms or had laid them down at his command—there came a second body of guards, commissioned by the Signoria to demand the persons of Fra Girolamo and his two coadjutors, Fra Domenico and Fra Salvestro.

Loud was the roar of triumphant hate when the light of lanterns showed the Frate issuing from the door of the convent with a guard who promised him no other safety than that of the prison. The struggle now was, who should get first in the stream that rushed up the narrow street to see the Prophet carried back in ignominy to the Piazza where he had braved it yesterday—who should be in the best place for reaching his ear with insult, nay, if possible, for smiting him and kicking him. This was not difficult for some of the armed Compagnacci who were not prevented from mixing themselves with the guards.

When Savonarola felt himself dragged and pushed along in the midst of that hooting multitude; when lanterns were lifted to show him deriding faces; when he felt himself spat upon, smitten and kicked with grossest words of insult, it seemed to him that the worst bitterness of life was past. If men judged him guilty, and were bent on having his blood, it was only death that awaited him. But the worst drop of bitterness can never be wrung on to our lips from without: the lowest depth of resignation is not to be found in martyrdom; it is only to be found when we have covered our heads in silence and felt, "I am not worthy to be a martyr: the truth shall prosper, but not by me."

But that brief imperfect triumph of insulting the Frate, who had soon disappeared under the doorway of the Old Palace, was only like the taste of blood to the tiger. Were there not the houses of the hypocrite's friends to be sacked? Already one half of the armed multitude, too much in the rear to share greatly in the siege of the convent, had been employed in the more profitable work of attacking rich houses, not with planless desire for plunder, but with that discriminating selection of such as

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belonged to chief Piagnoni, which showed that the riot was under guidance, and that the rabble with clubs and staves was well officered by sword-girt Compagnacci. Was there not—next criminal after the Frate—the ambitious Francesco Valori, suspected of wanting with the Frate's help to make himself a Doge or Gonfaloniere for life? And the grey-haired man who, eight months ago, had lifted his arm and his voice in such ferocious demand for justice on five of his fellow-citizens, only escaped from San Marco to experience what *others* called justice—to see his house surrounded by an angry, greedy multitude, to see his wife shot dead with an arrow, and to be himself murdered, as he was on his way to answer a summons to the Palazzo, by the swords of men named Ridolfi and Tornabuoni.

In this way that Masque of the Furies, called Riot, was played on in Florence through the hours of night and early morning.

But the chief director was not visible: he had his reasons for issuing his orders from a private retreat, being of rather too high a name to let his red feather be seen waving amongst all the work that was to be done before the dawn. The retreat was the same house and the same room in a quiet street between Santa Croce and San Marco, where we have seen Tito paying a secret visit to Dolfo Spini. Here the captain of the Compagnacci sat through this memorable night, receiving visitors who came and went, and went and came, some of them in the guise of armed Compagnacci, others dressed obscurely and without visible arms. There was abundant wine on the table, with drinking cups for chance comers; and though Spini was on his guard against excessive drinking, he took enough from time to time to heighten the excitement produced by the news that was being brought to him continually.

Among the obscurely dressed visitors Ser Ceccone was one of the most frequent, and as the hours advanced towards the morning twilight he had remained as Spini's constant companion, together with Francesco Cei, who was then in rather careless hiding in Florence, expecting to have his banishment revoked when the Frate's fall had been accomplished.

The tapers had burnt themselves into low shapeless masses, and holes in the shutters were just marked by a sombre outward light, when Spini, who had started from his seat and walked up and down with an angry flush on his face at some talk that had been going forward with those two unmilitary companions, burst out—

"The devil spit him! he shall pay for it, though. Ha, ha! the claws shall be down on him when he little thinks of them. So *he* was to be the great man after all! He's been pretending to chuck everything towards my cap, as if I were a blind beggarman, and all the while he's been winking and filling his own scarsella. I should like to hang skins about him and set my hounds on him! And he's got that fine ruby of mine, I was fool enough to give him yesterday. Malediction! And he was laughing at me in his sleeve two years ago, and spoiling the best plan that ever was laid. I was a fool for trusting myself with a rascal who had

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long-twisted contrivances that nobody could see to the end of but himself."

"A Greek, too, who dropped into Florence with gems packed about him," said Francesco Cei, who had a slight smile of amusement on his face at Spini's fuming. "You did *not* choose your confidant very wisely, my Dolfo."

"He's a cursed deal cleverer than you, Francesco, and handsomer too," said Spini, turning on his associate with a general desire to worry anything that presented itself.

"I humbly conceive," said Ser Ceccone, "that Messer Francesco's poetic genius will outweigh——"

"Yes, yes, rub your hands! I hate that notary's trick of yours," interrupted Spini, whose patronage consisted largely in this sort of frankness. "But there comes Taddeo, or somebody: now's the time! What news, eh?" he went on, as two Compagnacci entered with heated looks.

"Bad!" said one. "The people had made up their minds they were going to have the sacking of Soderini's house, and now they've been baulked we shall have them turning on us, if we don't take care. I suspect there are some Mediceans buzzing about among them, and we may see them attacking your palace over the bridge before long, unless we can find a bait for them another way."

"I have it," said Spini, and seizing Taddeo by the belt he drew him aside to give him directions, while the other went on telling Cei how the Signoria had interfered about Soderini's house.

"Ecco!" exclaimed Spini, presently, giving Taddeo a slight push towards the door. "Go and make quick work."

CHAPTER LXVII.

Waiting by the River.

About the time when the two Compagnacci went on their errand, there was another man who, on the opposite side of the Arno, was also going out into the chill grey twilight. His errand, apparently, could have no relation to theirs; he was making his way to the brink of the river at a spot which, though within the city walls, was overlooked by no dwellings, and which only seemed the more shrouded and lonely for the warehouses and granaries which at some little distance backward turned their shoulders to the river. There was a sloping width of long grass and rushes made all the more dank by broad gutters which here and there emptied themselves into the Arno.

The gutters and the loneliness were the attraction that drew this man to come and sit down among the grass, and bend over the waters that ran swiftly in the channelled slope at his side. For he had once

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had a large piece of bread brought to him by one of those friendly runlets, and more than once a raw carrot and apple parings. It was worth while to wait for such chances in a place where there was no one to see, and often in his restless wakefulness he came to watch here before daybreak; it might save him for one day the need of that silent begging which consisted in sitting on a church step or by the wayside out beyond the Porta San Frediano.

For Baldassarre hated begging so much that he would have perhaps chosen to die rather than make even that silent appeal, but for one reason that made him desire to live. It was no longer a hope; it was only that possibility which clings to every idea that has taken complete possession of the mind: the sort of possibility that makes a woman watch on a headland for the ship which held something dear, though all her neighbours are certain that the ship was a wreck long years ago. After he had come out of the convent hospital, where the monks of San Miniato had taken care of him as long as he was helpless; after he had watched in vain for the wife who was to help him, and had begun to think that she was dead of the pestilence that seemed to fill all the space since the night he parted from her, he had been unable to conceive any way in which sacred vengeance could satisfy itself through his arm. His knife was gone, and he was too feeble in body to win another by work, too feeble in mind, even if he had had the knife, to contrive that it should serve its one purpose. He was a shattered, bewildered, lonely old man; yet he desired to live: he waited for something of which he had no distinct vision—something dim, formless—that startled him, and made strong pulsations within him, like that unknown thing which we look for when we start from sleep, though no voice or touch has waked us. Baldassarre desired to live; and therefore he crept out in the grey light and seated himself in the long grass and watched the waters that had a faint promise in them.

Meanwhile the Compagnacci were busy at their work. The formidable bands of armed men, left to do their will, with very little interference from an embarrassed if not conniving Signoria, had parted into two masses, but both were soon making their way by different roads towards the Arno. The smaller mass was making for the Ponte Rubaconte, the larger for the Ponte Vecchio; but in both the same words had passed from mouth to mouth as a signal, and almost every man of the multitude knew that he was going to the Via de' Bardi to sack a house there. If he knew no other reason, could he demand a better?

The armed Compagnacci knew something more, for a brief word of command flies quickly, and the leaders of the two streams of rabble had a perfect understanding that they would meet before a certain house a little towards the eastern end of the Via de' Bardi, where the master would probably be in bed, and be surprised in his morning sleep.

But the master of that house was neither sleeping nor in bed: he had not been in bed that night. For Tito's anxiety to quit Florence had been

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stimulated by the events of the previous day : investigations would follow in which appeals might be made to him delaying his departure; and in all delay he had an uneasy sense that there was danger. Falsehood had prospered and waxed strong; but it had nourished the twin life, Fear. He no longer wore his armour, he was no longer afraid of Baldassarre; but from the corpse of that dead fear a spirit had risen—the undying *habit* of fear. He felt he should not be safe till he was out of this fierce, turbid Florence; and now he was ready to go. Maso was to deliver up his house to the new tenant; his horses and mules were awaiting him in San Gallo; Tessa and the children had been lodged for the night in the Borgo outside the gate, and would be dressed in readiness to mount the mules and join him. He descended the stone steps into the court-yard, he passed through the great doorway, not the same Tito, but as brilliant, as on the day when he had first entered that house and made the mistake of falling in love with Romola. The mistake was remedied now, the old life was cast off, and was soon to be far behind him.

He turned with rapid steps towards the Piazza dei Mozzi, intending to pass over the Ponte Rubaconte; but as he went along certain sounds came upon his ears that made him turn round and walk yet more quickly in the opposite direction. Was the mob coming into Oltrarno? It was a vexation, for he would have preferred the more private road. He must now go by the Ponte Vecchio; and unpleasant sensations made him draw his mantle close round him, and walk at his utmost speed. There was no one to see him in that grey twilight. But before he reached the end of the Via de' Bardi like sounds fell on his ear again, and this time they were much louder and nearer. Could he have been deceived before? The mob must be coming over the Ponte Vecchio. Again he turned, from an impulse of fear that was stronger than reflection; but it was only to be assured that the mob was actually entering the street from the opposite end. He chose not to go back to his house: after all, they would not attack *him*. Still, he had some valuables about him; and all things except reason and order are possible with a mob. But necessity does the work of courage. He went on towards the Ponte Vecchio, the rush and the trampling and the confused voices getting so loud before him that he had ceased to hear them behind.

For he had reached the end of the street, and the crowd pouring from the bridge met him at the turning and hemmed in his way. He had not time to wonder at a sudden shout before he felt himself surrounded, not, in the first instance, by an unarmed rabble, but by armed Compagnacci; the next sensation was that his cap fell off, and that he was thrust violently forward amongst the rabble, along the narrow passage of the bridge. Then he distinguished the shouts, "Piagnone! Medicean! Piagnone! Throw him over the bridge!"

His mantle was being torn off him with strong pulls that would have throttled him if the fibula had not given way. Then his scarsella was snatched at; but all the while he was being hustled and dragged; and the

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snatch failed—his scarsella still hung at his side. Shouting, yelling, half-motiveless execration rang stunningly in his ears, spreading even amongst those who had not yet seen him, and only knew there was a man to be reviled. Tito's horrible dread was that he should be struck down or trampled on before he reached the open arches that surmount the centre of the bridge. There was one hope for him—that they might throw him over before they had wounded him or beaten the strength out of him; and his whole soul was absorbed in that one hope and its obverse terror.

Yes—they *were* at the arches. In that moment Tito, with bloodless face and eyes dilated, had one of the self-preserving inspirations that come in extremity. With a sudden desperate effort he mastered the clasp of his belt, and flung belt and scarsella forward towards a yard of clear space against the parapet, crying in a ringing voice,—

"There are diamonds! there is gold!"

In the instant the hold on him was relaxed, and there was a rush towards the scarsella. He threw himself on the parapet with a desperate leap, and the next moment plunged—plunged with a great plash into the dark river far below.

It was his chance of salvation; and it was a good chance. His life had been saved once before by his fine swimming, and as he rose to the surface again after his long dive he had a sense of deliverance. He struck out with all the energy of his strong prime, and the current helped him. If he could only swim beyond the Ponte alla Carrara he might land in a remote part of the city, and even yet reach San Gallo. Life was still before him. And the idiot mob, shouting and bellowing on the bridge there, would think he was drowned.

They did think so. Peering over the parapet along the dark stream, they could not see afar off the moving blackness of the floating hair, and the velvet tunic-sleeves.

It was only from the other way that a pale olive face could be seen looking white above the dark water: a face not easy even for the indifferent to forget, with its square forehead, the long low arch of the eyebrows, and the long lustrous agate-like eyes. Onward the face went on the dark current, with inflated quivering nostrils, with the blue veins distended on the temples. One bridge was passed—the bridge of Santa Trinità. Should he risk landing now rather than trust to his strength? No. He heard, or fancied he heard, yells and cries pursuing him. Terror pressed him most from the side of his fellow-men: he was less afraid of indefinite chances, and he swam on, panting and straining. He was not so fresh as he would have been if he had passed the night in sleep.

Yet the next bridge—the last bridge—was passed. He was conscious of it; but in that tumult of his blood, he could only feel vaguely that he was safe and might land. But where? The current was having its way with him: he hardly knew where he was: exhaustion was bringing on the dreamy state that precedes unconsciousness.

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But now there were eyes that discerned him—aged eyes, strong for the distance. Baldassarre, looking up blankly from the search in the runlet that brought him nothing, had seen a white object coming along the broader stream. Could that be any fortunate chance for *him?* He looked and looked till the object gathered form: then he leaned forward with a start as he sat among the rank green stems, and his eyes seemed to be filled with a new light. Yet he only watched—motionless. Something was being brought to him.

The next instant a man's body was cast violently on the grass two yards from him, and he started forward like a panther, clutching the velvet tunic as he fell forward on the body and flashed a look in the man's face.

Dead—was he dead? The eyes were rigid. But no, it could not be—justice had brought him. Men looked dead sometimes, and yet the life came back into them. Baldassarre did not feel feeble in that moment. He knew just what he could do. He got his large fingers within the neck of the tunic and held them there, kneeling on one knee beside the body and watching the face. There was a fierce hope in his heart, but it was mixed with trembling. In his eyes there was only fierceness: all the slow-burning remnant of life within him seemed to have leaped into flame.

Rigid—rigid still. Those eyes with the half-fallen lids were locked against vengeance. *Could* it be that he was dead? There was nothing to measure the time: it seemed long enough for hope to freeze into despair.

Surely at last the eyelids were quivering: the eyes were no longer rigid. There was a vibrating light in them—they opened wide.

"Ah, yes! You see me—you know me!"

Tito knew him; but he did not know whether it was life or death that had brought him into the presence of his injured father. It might be death—and death might mean this chill gloom with the face of the hideous past hanging over him for ever.

But now Baldassarre's only dread was, lest the young limbs should escape him. He pressed his knuckles against the round throat and knelt upon the chest with all the force of his aged frame. Let death come now!

Again he kept his watch on the face. And when the eyes were rigid again, he dared not trust them. He would never loose his hold till some one came and found them. Justice would send some witness, and then, he, Baldassarre, would declare that he had killed this traitor, to whom he had once been a father. They would perhaps believe him now, and then he would be content with the struggle of justice on earth—then he would desire to die with his hold on this body, and follow the traitor to hell that he might clutch him there.

And so he knelt, and so he pressed his knuckles against the round throat, without trusting to the seeming death, till the light got strong, and

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he could kneel no longer. Then he sat on the body, still clutching the neck of the tunic. But the hours went on, and no witness came. No eyes descried afar off the two human bodies among the tall grass by the river-side. Florence was busy with greater affairs, and the preparation of a deeper tragedy.

Not long after those two bodies were lying in the grass, Savonarola was being tortured and crying out in his agony, "I will confess!"

It was not until the sun was westward that a waggon drawn by a mild grey ox came to the edge of the grassy margin, and as the man who led it was leaning to gather up the round stones that lay heaped in readiness to be carried away, he detected some startling object in the grass. The aged man had fallen forward, and his dead clutch was on the garment of the other. It was not possible to separate them: nay, it was better to put them into the waggon and carry them as they were into the great Piazza, that notice might be given to the Eight.

As the waggon entered the frequented streets there was a growing crowd escorting it with its strange burden. No one knew the bodies for a long while, for the aged face had fallen forward, half hiding the younger. But before they had been moved out of sight, they had been recognized.

"I know that old man," Piero di Cosimo had testified. "I painted his likeness once. He is the prisoner who clutched Melema on the steps of the Duomo."

"He is perhaps the same old man who appeared at supper in my gardens," said Bernardo Rucellai, one of the Eight. "I had forgotten him—I thought he had died in prison. But there is no knowing the truth now."

Who shall put his finger on the work of justice, and say, "It is there?" Justice is like the kingdom of God—it is not without us as a fact, it is within us as a great yearning.

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Over-eating and Under-eating.

Most persons are accustomed to think of starvation merely in its acute form, with the accompaniments of a death preceded by horrible suffering; and they can scarcely realize to themselves the less conspicuous but not less fatal influence which in its partial form it exerts as an abettor of disease. Let us try and realize what this influence is, under two or three different sets of circumstances. And first with regard to its mischievous action upon the infant population. We are well accustomed to speak of the period of infancy as a perilous one; and the public is tolerably familiar with the fact that an enormous proportion of the whole mortality occurs in subjects under the age of five years; but people seldom reason out to themselves the cause of this extraordinary and disproportionate fatality of disease in the very young: it does not seem to occur to them that the very diseases which decimate the infant population are just those which always fall with most crushing force on the ill fed. But ask the physician of any children's hospital what are the maladies which make most havoc with their little patients, and they will tell you, first of all, the epidemic fevers, the inflammatory diseases which are common at certain seasons of the year, intestinal complaints, and next to these, consumption, rickets, scrofula, diseases of the nervous system of a low type. If you have any doubt that starvation plays a large part in the production of such diseases as these, go to the homes of these children, and look at the multiplied appliances of it which meet the eye on every side. The poor, pallid, ill-fed mothers can hardly give a very rich supply of food to their infants during the time of their dependence on them, and then, when the time comes for artificial feeding, all the powers of ignorance come into play as auxiliaries and fosterers of disease. The proper feeding of a new-weaned infant is a most difficult problem, and it is usually solved by those poor mothers by an abrupt transition to the administration of food only suited to the nourishment of adults, and a small part only of which, with infinite distress to the infant, can get assimilated. And did the mothers ever so well understand the principles of infant dietetics, there are terrible hindrances in the way of their carrying them out, in many cases arising from the nature of their avocations. The young growing animal requires above all things that its food should be administered at short intervals, but the occupations of many poor women detain them from their homes for hours together; and in the meanwhile the infants are often intrusted to some ignorant nurse, or elder child.

A little examination of the Registrar-General's tables will show us the unmistakable traces of these evil influences. One of the first things we

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notice is that, if we take any year at random, and calculate the proportion between the mortality at all ages, and that during the first year of life, we soon perceive that there is a great and constant difference between different districts of the country in this respect. If we take the three districts—Lancashire, London, and the Eastern registral division—we get the following results:—In the year 1858 we find that in London the mortality at ages under one year was 22·2 per cent. of the total number of deaths; in the Eastern district, 22·6; whilst in Lancashire it was as high as 25 per cent. In the year 1855 the mortality of infants under one year old was—in London, 21 per cent. of the deaths at all ages; in the Eastern district, 22·4 per cent.; in Lancashire, 25 per cent.: while the mortality under the age of one year in the whole of England was, in the year 1858, only 23 5 per cent., and in 1855 only 22·9 per cent. of the deaths at all ages. If we examine the ratio which the deaths occurring between the ages of one and two years bear to the whole mortality during these two years, we shall find equally constant differences in the different districts. Thus, in 1855, the deaths at this age were—in London, 9·09 per cent. of the whole mortality; in Lancashire, 10·22 per cent.; in the Eastern division, only 5·49 per cent; while the avarage for all England was 7·65 per cent. of the general mortality. In 1858, the deaths between the ages of one and two years were—in London, 10·48 per cent.; in Lancashire, 10·96 per cent.; and in the Eastern division, only 5·68 per cent. of the general mortality: the average proportion for all England being 8·33 per cent.

The above figures, which are fully supported by more extended observations, which we have not space to detail here, bring strongly into relief the following facts:—1. The mortality during the first year of life is very considerably higher, in proportion to the total number of deaths, in Lancashire than either in London or the more sparsely populated Eastern district; between the two latter there is a small difference *in favour of London;* both of them are decidedly below the average for all England in this respect, and Lancashire is much above it. 2. The mortality during the second year of life is also higher in proportion to the deaths at all ages in Lancashire than either in London or the Eastern district: but in this case London nearly comes up to Lancashire, both being very greatly above the average for all England, while the Eastern district is almost as much below.

Now, seeing that there is such an immunity from danger to life during the first year in London, as compared with Lancashire, while in the second year this difference is almost done away with, and London becomes also extraordinarily fatal, we are driven to look for a special cause for these peculiarities. This cause is evidently constant, and not epidemic: and among constant causes there are none which are reconcileable with the facts already mentioned, except *peculiarity of nutrition.* Upon this hypothesis much that is difficult to understand might be readily explained. Both Lancashire and London are crowded districts, with a large poor popu-

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lation; any cause, then, of mortality existing generally among the poor will make itself quickly felt in the general tables for these districts. In Lancashire the occupations of poor women have a great tendency to make them neglect the feeding of their infants, even from the first, and at every subsequent stage. In London, on the contrary, during the first year, the infants, for the most part, receive the food which Nature has provided for them with tolerable regularity; but during the second year all sorts of mischief arise from the operation of two causes—(*a*) the improper continuance, by many poor women, of nursing, and (*b*) the employment of unsuitable artificial food, through sheer ignorance or prejudice.

Of course, if defective nutrition be the cause of so much of the fatal sickness that occurs among young children, the poor class will afford the most numerous cases; but it must not be supposed that there are none in the ranks of the wealthier. Ignorance and prejudice are not entirely confined to the indigent; and a large number of better-class children yearly fall victims to the extraordinary perversity and stupidity of nurses and mothers in their ideas of what forms a proper artificial food for a young infant. The commonest of common sense would seem to dictate that no very violent change should be made from the elements of food which were provided in the first place by nature; but this idea receives but small attention; and then, when the little unfortunates have fits it is put down to "the teeth;" or if their limbs become crooked, it is all laid to the blame of some servant who allowed them to walk too soon. That last sentence about crooked limbs reminds us that the disease of which it is a symptom—"rickets"—is a valuable illustration of the inexorable manner in which nature revenges outrages on her own plain indications. M. Guérin, a great authority upon this subject, made experiments upon animals, by which he proved the possibility of inducing artificial "rickets" at will by merely separating the young too early from their mothers, and feeding them with artificial food suited to the adult condition. There can be no doubt that in all these cases of improper infant feeding, partial starvation is induced, both by the imperfect assimilation of the food, and by the diminution of digestive power which is brought about.

The diseases of children caused by imperfect nutrition have received a most interesting and unexpected illustration in the course of the present cotton famine. The ill reputation of Lancashire for infant mortality has been already referred to. It now remains to be noted that, during the recent distress, this mortality has become *most markedly less*, notwithstanding the diminished resources of the parents. The explanation, on the principles already laid down, is simple: the mothers are now unemployed, and have time to attend to the feeding of their children; and they are far more skilful at this task than the incompetent persons to whom it is ordinarily confided, by whom the little creatures are, in plain truth, slowly starved in great numbers, or, at least, so weakened as to be unable to resist slight shocks of disease, particularly of epidemic diseases.

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It is during infancy that the results of partial starvation are most fatal, as might be expected. But its influence is obvious enough at later stages of life. Thus, the growing boy or girl not only becomes stunted and ill-formed, but special tendencies to disease develop themselves with the development of the body, the nervous system being particularly apt to suffer. In one instance, the brain is ill-developed and intelligence is low, in other cases an unnatural tendency to convulsive diseases is set up, in consequence of the general feebleness of the nervous centres, and the child becomes epileptic or hysterical, or gets St. Vitus' dance—diseases which may be produced by many other causes, but which, among the poor, certainly depend principally on deficient or innutritious food. Both in youth and in adult life the consequences of such deficiency are Protean in the shapes which they assume, ranging from the dreaded typhus-epidemics, which announce the existence of extreme and wide-spread destitution, through all the shades of bodily disorder consequent on lowered nutrition, till we come to a point at which it has no more distinct and tangible result than the production of rheumatism, according as the deprivation of food is greater or less, and according as it is general or merely restricts the choice of food-materials.

It may be well at the present time, when we are all so much interested by the famine in the cotton districts, to refer to the circumstances, so far as they can now be recalled, of another period of scarcity—the potato-famine, which was felt most severely in 1847–48. In Lancashire, the evil effects of high prices of food were aggravated by the fact that there was a lack of employment during many months; and the consequences were terrible: typhus fever was developed with great severity, and scurvy also appeared. But with the resumption of full work at the mills the public health soon improved. The course of events was otherwise in the agricultural counties. The case of Wiltshire* is sufficiently interesting to be worth inquiring into. In the whole of this county wages have been, and still are, low, especially in the northern division; so much lower than those of the Lancashire districts that the manner of feeding of the people is radically different in the two counties. As to the absolute quantity of food used in Wiltshire by the poorer class of labourers, I shall have more to say hereafter; at present it is sufficient to say that it can hardly have been much higher, in 1847-48, in a large part of the county, than that now obtainable by the unemployed of Lancashire by means of various sources of relief. The result was a large increase of mortality. The ordinary average for the county being 2·075 per cent. of the whole population, it rose in 1847 to 2·219; in 1848, to 2·236; and in 1849 (year of the cholera), to 2·285; these three years stand out in bad pre-eminence over all others. Yet the true type of famine-typhus was never developed, so far as can be discovered. And in connection with this fact, it is interesting to note that in the cotton districts at the

* This county is selected merely as an example of the low-paid agricultural districts.

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present time we are told that no considerable outbreak of this dreadful pestilence has occurred, except in Preston: a circumstance which must be traced, we think, to the methodical way in which the unemployed have been fed, as compared with the experience of 1847 in the same county. It is unfortunately impossible to procure sufficient data to construct an accurate table of the diseases produced by the scarcity of 1847–48 in Wiltshire and other districts similarly situated; but we know that among the principal results of a continuously meagre diet, such as a large part of the poor population were subjected to, bowel complaint, scurvy, scrofula, consumption, ulcers, rheumatism, and gout must be reckoned, besides a decidedly increased susceptibility to contagious fevers and acute inflammations. Nor must we forget the significant fact that among the poor of the poorer agricultural districts the proportion of lunacy is always uncommonly high.

So far, we may imagine the mind of an alderman to have dwelt with considerable complacency on our remarks. Under-feeding has been proved to be a most mischievous practice, to be avoided by all sensible people. In truth, however, this homily of ours on the evils of starvation has been introduced as a mere prologue to some serious remarks on the very opposite error into which as many of us as have the means are very apt to run, and for which we have *not* the excuse that "we couldn't help it." One hears very much in these days of the baneful practice of excess in drink; but it may be well to inform our readers that Dr. Fothergill, a physician of large experience, who had seen the worst of the old drinking times of the eighteenth century, expressed his deliberate opinion that even in the days when alcoholic debauches were fashionable, more harm was done by over-eating than by over-drinking. In the present day, at any rate, these words are, we believe, undoubtedly true; although we should hardly now-a-days agree with the notions that formerly prevailed as to the manner in which repletion works its evil effects.

First, as to repletion from mere quantity of food, this being decidedly in excess of what the healthy body requires, we may remark that whatever may be the truth, which is a matter of dispute, as to its producing a continuous and increasing state of plethora, of over-nourishment, with an accompanying tendency to congestion and a disposition to inflammatory disease, there can be no doubt that one of its most important evil results is the "fatigue," to use an expression of Dr. Brinton's, which it inflicts upon the organism. The researches of Bidder and Schmidt have proved that the various secretions which effect the elaboration of food are poured out in enormous quantities, and that so far from being altogether eliminated from the body, the greater part of them is again taken up into the blood. Now the secretion of complex fluids like these is, undoubtedly, a process which demands a large expenditure of vital force, and, in all probability, any unnecessary increase of such a process is highly exhausting to the system. Moreover, the systematic continuance of a diet which calls for such increased exertions rapidly weakens the digestive powers,

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and the ultimate result will inevitably be that less rather than more than the necessary amount of food will be concocted and made fit for the nutrition of the body, while the excreting organs will be taxed to the uttermost, and their powers seriously weakened for the important purpose of removing effete or poisonous matters from the body. It is thus possible that the over-fed man may be, in truth, at once starved and poisoned; and it may thus happen that the very diseases (*e. g.* gout) which are often produced by insufficient diet, may be caused by a wasteful supply of food.

In this country, at least, excess in eating means, for the most part, excess in consumption of flesh food; and unfortunately, the very persons who indulge most freely in this way are the least fitted for such habits, for they are generally individuals whose muscular system, from comparative disuse, is feebly developed. The alderman who indulges himself in half a dozen dishes, consisting of various kinds of flesh, and following a basin of rich turtle-soup, is not usually a Hercules as to muscle, or he might suffer less from his imprudence; for it has been established by physiologists that the animal whose muscular system is well-developed can dispose of more flesh food than a weaker animal. One of the most mischievous consequences of such a manner of feeding is the propensity engendered to take large doses of alcohol with the meals; and although some of the more immediate ill consequences of gourmandizing are thus obviated, the results are most unfortunate, for such doses of alcohol exercise an undoubtedly poisonous narcotic influence, not only upon the nervous system at large, but also, locally, upon the stomach, the nervous force of which they materially weaken. And when such liquors as port-wine are used in large quantity, the tendency to such disorders as gout, already sufficiently strong, is materially increased.

On the whole it may be said that absolute repletion, or excessive food-supply, has most certainly a deteriorating influence upon the tissues, and in this way it is possible to account for most of the morbid affections to which the over-fed system is liable. The tendency to fatty and earthy degeneration of muscles and of blood-vessels, and to wearing out, so to speak, of secreting glands, which is produced, is sufficient to explain the diseases of the heart, of the liver, the kidneys, and the brain to which systematic over-eaters are liable.

But besides the 'absolute' repletion which is caused by a food-supply altogether excessive in quantity, scarcely less harm is done to the system by the exhausting efforts which are entailed upon it by irregular eating. The practice, which is so common, of crowding several hearty meals into the space of a few hours, and then leaving the stomach empty during a long period, is very hurtful, and among the wealthy classes may almost be called the source of dyspepsia. And where the same practice is followed by persons whose meals are composed of coarser and less digestible food, as by young servant-girls, serious disease of the stomach is often produced, the evil effects being greatly increased by the haste

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and carelessness with which the food is chewed, or, rather, not chewed. But with all persons the question, how much should be eaten at any one particular meal, must be determined not so much by absolute rules as by relative considerations. Much depends on the amount of bodily fatigue which may exist at the moment of eating; for under circumstances of great exhaustion a meal which at other times would be moderate, may prove altogether excessive; and a basin of soup, under such circumstances, may be more nutritious than a dinner of five courses. Yet such is the force of habit, that men who come home exhausted by a day's laborious work at chambers or counting-house constantly sit down to meals which would tax the energy of the most vigorous stomach.

Even supposing, however, that the digestive organs are of such potent vigour that they can dispose of burdens which are far beyond the just limit, and that in one way or another the enormous mass of food does for the most part get absorbed and carried into the blood, it is not to be supposed, as the over-feeder is apt to do, that all difficulties are at an end. Nothing can be more conclusive than the proof obtained by Bischoff and Voit, that the taking of an unnecessarily large quantity of flesh food (the ordinary form of gourmandizing in England) produces a marked increase in the rate of the waste of the tissues, even while it preserves or increases the total bulk of the body; and this process, carried beyond very restricted limits, is undoubtedly most unwholesome, and must come in time to interfere with the proper balance of physiological processes, and, in fact, result in what really amounts to starvation. It is thus that persons who may never in their lives have felt the necessity of checking a large appetite and an overweening love of rich savoury meats, may be laying for themselves the foundation of a real atrophy of organs, the integrity of which is essential to any long continuance of life.

If the reader now, in some alarm at these remarks, proceeds to inquire, "How much, then?" and endeavours to fix us to some exact quantitative rules, we must fairly tell him that he will be disappointed. So many considerations affect the question of the total bulk of daily food necessary, that absolute rules are impossible: nevertheless, it is extremely useful to examine those rough approximative calculations which have been made by various observers, both scientific and practical. Foremost in interest are some well-known experiments of Chossat, which show under what circumstances of feeding life can *not* be supported: any diet, he found, which permitted any one of the higher vertebrate animals to lose so much as two-fifths of its weight invariably proved fatal to its life when that point of wasting was reached. The experiments were repeated by Schuchardt with substantially the same results; and both these observers established the fact that improper feeding produced precisely the same results (though in a longer time) as absolute starvation. If we pass from the consideration of what will cause fatal starvation to the results of a diet only slightly, by comparison, deficient, we find an apt illustration of the results of such a style of feeding in the circumstances of Wiltshire

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during the potato famine, and of Lancashire at this present time. In the latter county, we learn from the quarterly report of the Registrar-General that the average income of the unemployed population for a long time past has not exceeded 4*d.* per head per diem, while in a large number of cases it sinks far below this scale. But the prices of provisions are not at famine rate, and in this respect there is a vast difference from the state of things which prevailed in 1847; and, on the whole, the condition of the people may be said to represent a degree of nutrition not very materially below the line of sufficiency.

In Wiltshire there has always been a great difference between different districts as to the amount of wages; but in a large portion of the county they did not exceed 6*s.* a week prior to the potato famine: that was the price of the men's labour, and that source of income would be supplemented by the sums they could earn by piece-work, and at extraordinary times, such as harvesting. Moreover, many of the cottages had gardens attached to them, in which the labourers could grow vegetables, either for their own use or for sale. At present the wages in most places where they were originally 6*s.* have risen to 8*s.* per week; and we believe that, for the most part, this change was effected during the time of the distress of 1847-48: it is fair, therefore, to suppose that men in full work received 8*s.* But, on the other hand, there was a great failure, not only in potatoes, but in other vegetables which at ordinary times might have been grown in the cottagers' gardens. In a large number of cases of families, consisting of man, wife, and three or four young children, 8*s.* a week must have represented the whole income during the very worst times of distress from high prices; as, for instance, a month or two prior to the harvest of 1847, when bread rose to 1*s.* 5*d.* the 8 lbs. Now, if we subtract from the weekly 8*s.*, 1*s.* for rent, another 1*s.* for firing, and another 1*s.* for tea and sugar, there remains 5*s.* for the solid food—necessaries. If we allow the man and wife 8 lbs. of bread each, and three children 4 lbs. each per week, we consume another 3*s.* 6½*d.*, leaving only 1*s.* 5½*d.* How would this small remaining sum be spent?—in vegetables or meat, butter or cheese? It is impossible to give a precise answer to this question, but this much is certain, that many labourers' families lived altogether on bread, and that a large number more lived upon bread chiefly, supplemented with a little rice, of which the coarser kinds were then sold at 2*d.* per pound, and perhaps occasionally a few vegetables. Meat of all kinds disappeared almost totally (even bacon) from use, and butter and cheese were also for the most part given up. To the last, however, tea never appears to have been renounced; the people would rather stint themselves in solid food than do without that luxury, or necessary, as we may please to call it. It is a fact, that not only did these labourers live, in by far the greatest part, on bread, but that (like all poor persons whom we have ever known) they utterly refused to eat anything but the whitest and finest, that is, the least nutritious, kinds: and in this way the evils of the distress must have been most materially aggravated, not only as regards the actual

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fatality of disease, but as regards the production of chronic diseases, such as low gout and rheumatism. On the whole, we are justified in saying that the scale of nutrition was certainly fully as low, and probably considerably lower than that prevailing among the unemployed of Lancashire at the present time; or, at least, that this would be true with regard to the northern division of Wiltshire, and this, too, with the men *in work*, and not idle, as the Lancashire operatives are. Somewhere about one pound and a half of bread per diem, together with a little tea, must have constituted the diet of many a working labourer—a diet which he would probably, with an almost pardonable instinct, in many cases supplement by running up a limited score for beer at the public-house.

Now if we turn from this picture, roughly drawn it is true, of an *in*sufficient diet, to the declarations of physiologists as to what is sufficient, we shall find considerable diversity among their opinions. Valentin, who experimented on himself, states that about 6 lbs. per diem of solid and liquid food was the quantity which sufficed to keep him in full health; and Dr. Brinton, who agrees generally with this estimate, considers that 2 lbs. should consist of solid food. Dalton, an American physiologist, considers, from experiments made on himself, that about 2½ lbs. of solids and 3 lbs. of liquids per diem is the proper quantity, at least when a diet is used consisting of bread, meat, butter, coffee, and water, as in his investigations. The elaborate researches of Vierordt give a different result, only about 18 ounces of solids being used, together with a much larger quantity of water than in either of the preceding estimates. But as the experiments of Valentin and Dalton were made on themselves, *i. e.* on persons actively exerting their minds (and probably their bodies also), whereas the subject of Vierordt's experiments seems to have been a mere human lay figure, using, probably, the minimum of exertion of any kind, no fair comparison can be made between the results.

So much for attempts roughly to decide the quantity of diet merely by weight. The fact, however, becomes very quickly apparent to any student of dietetics, that an immense deal depends on *quality* also, and numerous direct researches illustrate this principle very forcibly. In the first place, it is found that a monotonous diet, consisting of any one substance only, is very innutritious, a fact which agrees with Bischoff and Voit's observations on dogs. The latter observers found that to support dogs adequately upon a diet consisting of lean meat only, as much of the food must be used daily as would equal 1-20th to 1-25th of the entire weight of the animal. If, however, a certain small proportion of fat were added, the quantity of lean flesh required was reduced to an entirely disproportionate extent, not more than one-half or one-third as much being used. The substance on which, as the sole article of diet, it is easiest for the adult human being to subsist in health, is doubtless bread, but monotony even in the use of this admirable food has been abundantly proved to be very hurtful; and most probably this kind of sameness of diet co-operates powerfully with mere insufficiency of food in producing evil results in

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times of scarcity, such as that of the potato famine. In Wiltshire, for instance, wages of labourers are, in many parts, even now, only eight shillings a week; but owing to the comparative cheapness of provisions, and to other circumstances, the people are able constantly to add to their meals butter and cheese, a little small beer, and more occasionally some vegetables, and a little bacon.* The mortality of the county in 1862, with a population, of course, largely increased since 1847, was 20 per cent. less, in actual numbers, than that of the latter year, and still further below the numbers of 1848; and we may fairly suppose that, for the mere purposes of fitting the men for hard labour in the field, and keeping them in good animal health, their diet is sufficient.

If this indeed be the case, if anything like the diet of the agricultural labourer be enough for the purposes of ordinary existence, what are our wealthy classes doing? Here, however, we must at once make a distinction, separating the men of tranquil, cheerful lives, whose occupations do not expose them to much brain-fatigue or anxiety, from those who are subjected to such influences. It is impossible in the space of this paper to go into the interesting, but very large question of the kinds of diet suitable to various occupations; but we may state the general principle which is now fully recognized, that continuous and severe exertion of the intellect, or excitement of the passions, or even continuous deprivation of the pleasing emotions (such as is experienced by prisoners confined for long terms), absolutely requires an increased and richer food in order to maintain health. A considerable proportion of our wealthy over-feeders lead lives which may be said to be as nearly as possible free from the disturbance of laborious intellectual work, or of wearing emotion, and to these, as far as their own chances of long and comfortable lives are concerned, it might be well, perhaps, to apply such a system of diet as we have described. But we have, by no means, exhausted the difficulties of the problem, unless we could be sure that not only would such a diet be sufficient to carry such men through a long and healthy life, but would also ensure, as far as such a thing can be ensured, that their offspring will be born with healthy organisms, and specially with vigorous nervous systems, which would not be likely to break down under the first strain put upon them. On the whole, perhaps Dalton's estimate of two pounds and a half solid and three pounds of liquid food may be considered as nearly representing the quantities which would be suitable for an adult not living a life of great mental exertion or anxiety, *and, like Dalton, not drinking alcohol.* In the case of a moderate consumer of alcoholic drinks, this proportion may be somewhat reduced. We agree with Mr. Lewes that it is impossible to doubt that, making all allowance for possible peculiarities of circumstances and constitution, the very small daily quantity of solid food (12 oz.), on which the celebrated Cornaro lived for so many years, was rendered suffi-

* The kindness of the masters, doubtless, in many cases, helps the labourers; as for instance when they grind corn into flour for them, gratis.

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cient, in great measure, by the 14 oz. of light wine which he added to it; though we would by no means recommend our readers to try the effect of such severe abstinence, even with this mitigation.

If any such standard as that of Valentin or Dalton, as to quantity of food, be adopted, attention must be paid to the proportion of flesh-food which should enter into it. Dalton allowed one pound of meat per diem; and from a comparison of numerous dietaries of public institutions, due allowance being made for the peculiar circumstances of their respective inmates, this seems to approach pretty nearly to the best general average that can be given for the nourishment of adult males. From what has been already stated as to the influence of a high muscular development in the demand for flesh-food, it will be inferred that women, under ordinary circumstances, would require less of this sort of nourishment than men. It is scarcely necessary to add that to the digestive organs of many of both sexes, such a large proportion of meat is found to be unsuited, and that it is necessary to find other means of accomplishing the object which it is supposed to effect, *i. e.* the supply of a large quantity of concentrated nitrogenous food to the system. Here we may revert to the experiments of Bischoff and Voit, already alluded to, in which it was observed that the addition of a certain amount of fat to the flesh-food has an extraordinary influence in diminishing the quantity of the latter which is required. And we may remark that further researches of these physiologists have demonstrated that sugar and starchy matters play, to a great extent, the same part. These observations enable us to understand such phenomena as the diet of the Hindoo, which consists in great part of rice (a highly starchy food), together with a considerable quantity of melted butter (animal fat), and a small proportion only of some cereal grains, containing nitrogen. In the case of the Hindoo, however, this substitution of starchy and fatty for nitrogenous elements of food has been carried to an excess which prevents that development of muscular strength which distinguishes the well-fed Englishman, even when he gets almost no food but bread; but this would be a far less calamity to many of our lazy gourmandizers than is the condition which they bring themselves to by fatiguing their organisms with continual over-doses of flesh-foods.

But, indeed, without travelling out of the range of nitrogenous substances, there are most important substitutes for flesh-food which are practically adopted into use by large sections of the population, and which yet receive but slight attention from the wealthy classes. Cheese and onions are two articles of so extremely plebeian a character that they are apt to be unjustly depreciated; and yet so high is their nutritive value that we have no hesitation in saying that they, more than anything else, stand between the low-paid agricultural labourer of some districts and the kind of chronic starvation which ensues on a diet quantitatively not very much more scanty than that which now keeps him in tolerable health. Both these are highly nitrogenous. With regard to onions, their value is

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so well understood in the navy, that in the list of rations they are considered equivalent in nutritive value to four times their weight of any other kind of vegetable except their congeners, the leeks; while with regard to cheese, we may state that in nutritive value it equals or exceeds any single article of diet which it is possible to name. The one objection to cheese is that it is frequently slow of digestion; but this defect may be overcome, as Dr. Brinton well remarks, by "minute division, cooking, or careful mastication," and "by a proper admixture of vegetable food." Whence it follows that the cheese-macaroni, with which many persons carelessly finish an already copious dinner, is by no means a mere alimentary trifle that may be thrown in without due account taken; and that large masses of savoury Portugal onions, however tempting, are not the thing to add to a meal without making serious compensating reductions.

The evils of excess in those forms of vegetable food which are very slightly nitrogenous is trifling compared to excesses in flesh-food, in bread, or in any of the more nitrogenous vegetables. The greatest evil, perhaps, of an excessive consumption of highly starchy vegetables, like potatoes, is, that their mere bulk satisfies the sense of hunger to a greater extent than their starchy materials can compensate for the deficiency of nitrogen and of various important mineral matters. Something of the same kind occurs as a result of the practice of living almost exclusively on the *whitest* sorts of bread, which contain far less nitrogen than the coarser varieties. Whoever could cure the poorer classes of this very serious dietetic error would confer a double benefit on them, in saving them from the results of mechanical repletion, combined with real starvation, of a sort which tends to produce rheumatic and gouty affections. It is a fortunate thing that, as pointed out by Dr. Brinton, the direct evil consequences of an excessive ingestion of starchy matters are very much diminished by their passing through the body undissolved.

It will be observed that we have made no mention of the basis which by many physiologists is considered to afford far the safest ground for any quantitative rules of diet, viz. the calculation of the excreta of the body during long periods of time. It must not be supposed, however, that we are indifferent to this subject, which is likely soon to receive an important development from investigations now in progress in the hands of more than one accomplished physiologist; but, in truth, it would be impossible to do justice to that aspect of the question without introducing, also, considerations as to the influence of particular occupations, &c., which would altogether exceed the space which we can afford. It seemed preferable to point to the results of experiments ready made to our hand by accidental circumstances, by the skill of the physiologist, or by the practical shrewdness of persons who have found themselves under the necessity of dieting large numbers of men, women, and children. From the latter class of experiments we select one, in conclusion, which it seems to us particularly useful to introduce to general notice, viz. the scale of

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diets adopted at the infirmary for scrofulous children at Margate, an establishment at which, of course, good nutrition is a *sine quâ non* of success in treatment. We quote from Dr. Brinton.

At this infirmary, it appears that children between the ages of five and ten years receive daily 8 or 10 ounces of bread and half a pint of milk (with water), 3 or 4 ounces of roast or boiled meat, ½ lb. potatoes or other vegetables, with a quarter of a pint of porter, on five days of the week, substituted on the remaining two days by from 8 to 12 ounces rice or currant pudding, or occasionally some soup instead. Children between the ages of ten and sixteen receive daily 12 to 14 ounces bread and a pint and a half of tea, 5 or 6 ounces roast or boiled meat, with 1 lb. potatoes or other vegetables, together with half a pint of porter, on five days of the week, substituted on the remaining two days by 16 ounces rice or currant pudding, or soup. This is certainly a liberal diet, and it may be added that it is an extremely successful one; while the only source of waste in it is the "plain" roasting and boiling of the meat: against which venerated national custom it appears useless to struggle at present.

Our observations are intended rather to be suggestive of thought in our readers than to convey exact rules. They are intended to show what an important influence a slight and perfectly avoidable dietetic mistake may have on the health of large classes of people; but they are by no means intended to cast a slight upon the sacred right of private judgment in matters of supply. Every heart, and every stomach also, "knows its own burden," though possibly the remarks we have made may suggest doubts in the minds of some how far this latter sort of knowledge goes. One delusion, at least, we may hope they will serve to dispel, that the greater the bulk of food, especially meat, which can be taken without actual digestive discomfort, the better; while possibly they may suggest a rational explanation of the calming influence which *moderate* stimulation unquestionably exerts upon the outrageousness of that sort of appetite which clamours unreasonably for mere quantity of food.

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Stage Adaptations of Shakspeare.

During the palmy days of the drama, as they are called, people went oftener than they do now to see the plays of Shakspeare represented on the stage; but they studied them less in the closet. Hence veneration for the name of the poet was not necessarily accompanied by an accurate knowledge of his poetry; and while that name appeared in the bills the audience felt satisfied that they heard the genuine strains of the Swan of Avon, whereas, in many cases, they were presented with parodies of the Shakspearian creations, rather than with the creations themselves. The form in which several of Shakspeare's plays appeared, not more than thirty years ago, was the result of corruptions and partial restorations, the history of which extends over something like a century and a half. Within the last thirty years, on the other hand, a respect for the text of the poet has sprung up, which was totally unknown to the past generation, with the exception of the literary few; and managers have therefore vied with each other in banishing the interpolations and supplying the omissions of a former age. Save in the case of one popular play, Shakspeare's text has been taken as the basis of stage representation, without regard to his adaptors; the introduction of new matter into the text has been strictly prohibited, and where excisions have been made, it has been not with the intention of "improving" Shakspeare, but in deference to two qualities which distinguish our age from his—namely, an increased sensitiveness to indelicacies of language, and a less commendable dread of the tedious. Those managers who have carried to the extreme the theory that Shakspeare is most highly honoured when his works are made a vehicle for pageantry show a respect for his words which would have astounded a Garrick, or even a John Kemble. Opposed as they may be on abstract principles of art, such managers can plausibly answer, referring to a play-book in which there are no stage directions, that the poet has left open the question of decoration, and that whatever they introduce in the shape of tableaux between the acts, processions, and panoramas, they have not sinned against the letter of his law. Under these circumstances, there is no doubt that, much as the taste for the higher drama has declined among the public, and much as the strength of theatrical companies has diminished, more genuine Shakspearian poetry has been heard on the London stage during the reign of Queen Victoria than during the reign of any other sovereign since Charles I. Within the last thirty years nearly the whole of Shakspeare's dramatic works, even including the doubtful *Pericles*, have been presented to the public essentially as written by the poet, whereas the plays exhibited to our fathers in an uncorrupted state were few indeed.

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In this paper we design to pass in rapid review the principal alterations that were made in the most popular of Shakspeare's plays, on the London stage, beginning at the time when the closing of the theatres by the Puritans was followed by the formation of two companies—the "Duke's" and the "King's"—under the patents of Charles II.

During the first season of the Duke's company at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, opened by Sir W. Davenant in 1661, three of Shakspeare's plays were produced. One of them was *Hamlet*, in which the Danish prince was represented by the great Betterton, with whose name for many years it remained associated as one of his finest parts. This tragedy was played probably as Shakspeare wrote it; for even as late as 1673, when the Duke's company had removed from Lincoln's Inn Fields to a larger and more commodious theatre in Dorset Gardens, we find the Norwegian prince, Fortinbras, now invariably omitted, set down among the characters.

The other two Shakspearian plays were *Measure for Measure* and *Romeo and Juliet*, which were both presented in an altered shape. Why Sir William Davenant should have taken the trouble to convert the former of these plays into the *Law against Lovers*, it is hard to conjecture. All that could have interested the audience at Lincoln's Inn Fields belongs to the old play; and though a Beatrice and a Benedick are added to the characters, these are but faint shadows of their namesakes in *Much Ado about Nothing*, to whom they owe their existence. Of the *Law against Lovers* we hear nothing after the first year of its production, though it is to be found in Davenant's collected works. The altered version of *Romeo and Juliet*, played at Lincoln's Inn Fields, was by James Howard, son of the Earl of Berkshire, and brother to the Lady Elizabeth Howard, who married Dryden. The piece was never printed; but, thanks to Downes, the prompter, we know enough about it to conclude that the alterations were made to conciliate those sensitive persons among the public who would have every story come to a blissful termination. According to James Howard, Romeo and Juliet lived, married, and were happy. This modification, however, did not please everybody; so, to accommodate all tastes, the piece was played as a tragedy on one night, and as a tragi-comedy on another. There is one reason to regret the loss of Howard's play: among the characters enumerated by Downes is Count Paris's wife, and, as Count Paris is only of use to the plot as Juliet's suitor, accepted by her parents, one would like to know what he could have done with a better half. Was he, as well as Juliet, on the brink of bigamy, when his suit was encouraged by old Capulet?

It was not till within a very late period that this popular tragedy was performed as Shakspeare wrote it. In 1680 a tragedy by Otway called *Caius Marius* was brought out at Dorset Gardens, half of which the poet acknowledges as "rifled" from Shakspeare, though he does not mention the particular play on which his depredations were made. The hero is the celebrated Caius Marius, played by Betterton, and is altogether independent of Shakspeare; but his son, Marius Junior, and Lavinia,

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daughter to Metellus, who wishes her to marry Sylla, are Romeo and Juliet transferred from mediæval Verona to ancient Rome. Friar Lawrence is converted into a priest of Hymen, and Mercutio, here called Sulpitius, discourses on Queen Mab in this fashion :—

> Oh, the small queen of fairies
> Is busy in his brains ; the Mab that comes
> Drawn by a little train of smallest atoms
> Over men's noses as they lie asleep,
> In a chariot of an empty hazel-nut,
> Made by a joiner-squirrel : in which state
> She gallops night by night through lovers' brains,
> And then how wickedly they dream all know.
> Sometimes she courses o'er a courtier's nose,
> And then he dreams of begging an estate.
> Sometimes she hurries o'er a soldier's neck,
> And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats ;
> Of breaches, ambuscados, temper'd blades,
> Of good rich winter quarters and false musters.
> Sometimes she tweaks a poet by the ear,
> And then dreams he
> Of panegyrics, flattering dedications,
> And mighty presents from the Lord knows who,
> But wakes as empty as he laid him down.
> She has been with Sylla too, and he dreams now
> Of nothing but a consulship.

In writing the above, Otway seems to have had no other object than to lessen the fanciful character of the original speech. In the description of the apothecary, put into the mouth of Marius Junior, Shakspeare is more closely followed, though one can scarcely help being startled at the strange alteration made in the second line.

> I do remember an apothecary,
> And hereabouts he dwells,

said Shakspeare, but this simple statement will not do for Otway, who thus gives it a fine French polish,—

> I do remember an apothecary
> That dwelt about this *rendezvous* of death.

From the heading of the scene, we learn that the "rendezvous of death" was a "churchyard," which in the days of Sylla and Marius must have been a somewhat singular place. However, people were not particular with respect to details of time and place till long after the days of Thomas Otway. The beauty of the speech made it celebrated, and so completely had *Romeo and Juliet* been forgotten at the commencement of the eighteenth century, that the famous description of the apothecary was frequently cited as a passage by Otway, without the slightest suspicion that the real author was Shakspeare.

However, if Otway rifled Shakspeare, he suffered a reprisal rather more than sixty years afterwards. In 1744 *Romeo and Juliet*, under its original name, was produced at the Haymarket, after lying dormant

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for one hundred years, according to the play-bills—for about eighty years in point of fact; but probably the piece at Lincoln's Inn Fields, rendered remarkable by the appearance of Paris's wife, had been forgotten. The tragedy, as now revived, was modified by Theophilus Cibber, who, in the last act, introduced a good lump of Otway. It is needless to remind the Shakspearian reader that, in the original play, Romeo dies before Juliet recovers from the effects of the drug. Marius Junior was more fortunate, for he lived long enough to enjoy a few minutes' converse with his dear Lavinia, and all that passed between the Roman lovers was given to the Veronese pair by the tender-hearted Theophilus.

This alteration of the fifth act of *Romeo and Juliet* by Cibber had a lasting effect. The meeting of the lovers was too striking a situation not to find favour in theatrical eyes, and when, four years after Cibber's revival, Garrick brought out a version of his own at Drury Lane, this situation was retained, though very little of Otway's language was adopted. Garrick's version held possession of the stage till within a very recent period; and there is no doubt that many a respectable old gentleman, whose play-going days are over, and who bestows but little time on the study of Elizabethan poetry, firmly believes that Juliet recovered from her trance to take leave of her dying Romeo, who, among other things, uttered the exclamation—"Fathers have flinty hearts." The same old play-goer, if his memory does not fail him, will recount how, when the drop-scene rose for the fifth act, a bier containing the body of the unfortunate Juliet and surrounded by a forest of funereal feathers, was carried across the stage, accompanied on its passage by a dirge of the most doleful kind. Alas! all this, the "flinty hearts" inclusive, belonged to Garrick—not Shakspeare. We believe that it was under Mr. Macready's management of Drury Lane that the original last scene was restored, and we strongly suspect that Garrick's words are still uttered in some country theatres, and that there are provincial connoisseurs who, if they did not hear that "Fathers have flinty hearts," would think that strange liberties had been taken with the text of Shakspeare.

The *Tempest*, by Dryden and Davenant, originally brought out at Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1667, exercised an influence on the stage nearly as long as that of Otway's *Caius Marius* on *Romeo and Juliet*. In this piece the departure from Shakspeare is so very great, that it may be almost considered a new play, written on a Shakspearian basis, and adorned with Shakspearian passages. Miranda has a sister named Dorinda, who, like her, has never beheld a man, and that this kind of ignorance may not exclusively belong to the ladies, a certain Hippolito is introduced, who has been brought up by Prospero in a corner of the enchanted island, remote from his own dwelling, and has never beheld a woman. This Hippolito, though not aware of his own high condition, is the lawful heir to the dukedom of Mantua, which has been usurped by Alonzo, Duke of Savoy (not King of Sicily), and when Prospero recovers his rights, Hippolito is equally fortunate. Of course the young Mantuan falls in

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love with Dorinda, but one of the effects of his secluded education has been a disposition to become a general lover of female beauty, and his naïve determination to fall in love with Miranda, as well as her sister, involves him in a quarrel with Ferdinand, which turns out so unluckily that he receives a dangerous sword-wound, and would certainly die, were he not healed by a singular process.

The charm by which Hippolito is saved from death is too curious not to merit a slight digression, connected as it is with a superstition not now generally known. Prospero, believing the young man to be really dead, threatens to avenge his fate by the death of Ferdinand, and is very indignant with Ariel, whose neglect has occasioned the encounter. Ariel, however, having discovered that there is yet life in the supposed corpse, thus addresses his master :—

> When I was chidden by my mighty lord
> For my neglect of young Hippolito,
> I went to view his body, and soon found
> His soul was but retired, not sallied out :
> Then I collected
> The best of simples underneath the moon,
> The best of balms, and to the wound applied
> The healing juice of vulnerary herbs ;
> His only danger was his loss of blood.
> But now he's waked, my lord, and at this hour
> He must be dress'd again, as I have done it.
> Anoint the sword which pierc'd him with this weapon-salve,
> And wrap it close from air till I have time
> To visit him again.

The way in which the charm operates is shown in the following scene. Miranda, charged by her father, takes the sword wrapped up to Hippolito, who is faint with loss of blood, when the following dialogue occurs :—

> *Hip.* Oh ! my wound pains me.
> *Mir.* I am come to cure you.
> [*She unwraps the sword.*
> *Hip.* Alas, I feel the cold air come to me ;
> My wound shoots worse than ever. [*She wipes and anoints the sword.*
> *Mir.* Does it still grieve you ?
> *Hip.* Now methinks there's something
> Laid just upon it.
> *Mir.* Do you find no ease ?
> *Hip.* Yes, yes ! upon the sudden all the pain
> Is leaving me. Sweet heaven, how I am eased !

In several old plays reference is made to the cure of wounds by anointing the offending weapon, but probably this is the most complete illustration of the superstition.

As we learn in the case of *enfans terribles*, perfect innocence will frequently cause the utterance of impudent things, and the dialogue of the innocent ladies and the guileless youth is seasoned with a great many of those pleasantries which were highly acceptable to the Court of Charles II.,

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but which occasion the retirement of most plays written in his reign to the most inaccessible shelves of our bookcases. Caliban is blest with a twin sister, named (after his deceased mother) Sycorax, who is a most disgusting personage, and marries Trinculo, who is not a butler but a boatswain. Stephano, not a fool, but the shipmaster, sinks into comparative insignificance, and two other sailors are saved from the wreck. The endeavours of Trinculo to found a duchy of which he himself is the duke, and the political difficulties which he encounters, give rise to scenes which are by no means void of humour, and which were doubtless intended to satirize the imaginary republics that occupied many heads about the time of the Commonwealth.

The best way to enjoy Dryden and Davenant's play is to think as little as possible about Shakspeare during its perusal. When it is finished, and the thought of the old *Tempest* rushes back upon the mind, one may fairly wonder how so much complicated indecency could possibly have been preferred to one of the most chaste and beautiful works that ever poet created.

In the year 1746, Shakspeare's *Tempest* was revived at Drury Lane, but we cannot suppose that it found much favour, since in the following year Dryden and Davenant's work was revived at the same house by Garrick, who did not play in the piece, and could not therefore have been influenced by professional vanity. In 1756 there was something like a return to Shakspeare, for an "opera called the *Tempest*" was brought out at Drury Lane, in which, though some of Dryden's additions were retained, the intruders Hippolito and Dorinda were omitted, and in 1757 the play itself was performed in its original shape, and seems to have retained possession of the stage, at both Drury Lane and Covent Garden, till the winter of 1789, when an adaptation by Mr. John Kemble was produced. This new version, in which Hippolito and Dorinda again made their appearance, and which altogether was a sort of compromise between Shakspeare and Dryden, was the recognized *Tempest* of the stage till Mr. Macready revived the original play at Covent Garden.

There is no doubt that all vestiges of Dryden's play are now swept away for ever. The *Tempest* is more familiar to the present generation than to the last, since it affords opportunities for those elaborate decorations which are so much to the taste of modern play-goers, and has therefore been a favourite play with modern managers. Kemble's version, though occasionally performed, was not familiar to the general public when Mr. Macready's revival took place, and this was followed by successful representations of the original play at the Princess's and Sadler's Wells, under the respective managements of Mr. Charles Kean and Mr. Phelps.

Far otherwise is it with *Richard III.*, of which Colley Cibber's version, in spite of every effort to revive the text of Shakspeare, is the acknowledged play for the stage. Nor is it likely to lose its supremacy, for it happens that the Richard, with whom the names of the great old actors are associated, and who remained for years before the public, the object of universal admiration, when everybody went to the play, is

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emphatically the Richard of Cibber, for whom the Richard of Shakspeare's "history" offers no equivalent. With the *Tempest*, a piece not very frequently acted, the substitution of one version for another could be effected without difficulty. The obliteration of the last interview between Romeo and Juliet, which had drawn tears down so many fair cheeks for so many years, was a bolder movement in the Shakspearian direction, and play-goers might possibly be offended to learn that Romeo was once in love with a certain Rosaline, when the commonly acted play had conveyed the impression that his first love was Juliet. Nevertheless the two lovers, according to Garrick, were essentially the same as their Shakspearian prototypes, and the operation, though painful, was still bearable. But when the hand of the restorer was laid on *Richard III.*, what could people think of a Gloster who neither murdered Henry VI. before their eyes, nor uttered the famous speech about conscience, nor said, "Off with his head, so much for Buckingham," nor exclaimed, "Richard's himself again," when he had overcome his terror at the ghosts, and who filled up the measure of his iniquities by dying without a word, whereas the familiar Cibberian Richard had employed his last breath in the delivery of a celebrated speech. Literary men might talk; but this restored Richard was in the eyes of the multitude a fleshless intruder, who never could rival the popularity of the old usurper, nor did tragic actors greatly care to represent him. Cibber's Richard is the Gloster of Garrick, Cook, and Kean, and the other is not like him.

We need not describe at length an altered play, which to many persons is much more familiar than the original. It may be observed that the alterations are made for the sole purpose of giving increased importance to the principal character at the expense of the rest. Other plays may have been modified with a view of conciliating the audience, but in the case of *Richard III.* the actor's desire to be as conspicuous as possible is pre-eminently consulted, and thus all inducement to attempt a restoration is cut off at the fountain-head. When the piece was first brought out at Drury Lane in 1700, no other Richard having been seen since the days of Charles I. at the latest, Cibber nearly marred the effect of his own labours by playing the crook-backed tyrant himself, for, though he gained a high reputation in comedy, he was never esteemed as a tragedian. However, his failure could not destroy the predilection for a character which was literally studded over with points, and Cibber's *Richard III.* retained an undisputed possession of the stage till 1821, when an abortive attempt made to restore the original play at Covent Garden rather confirmed than diminished its popularity. A similar attempt, though with fair success, was made by Mr. Phelps at Sadler's Wells at a more recent period, and great commendation was bestowed by the critics on this truly Shakspearian manager. But the Richard to which people had been accustomed was not to be displaced, and Porson's remark, made in imitation of a well-known passage in Homer, that "if the persons who have only read Cibber's *Richard III.* were divided into companies of ten, and if every one who had

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read the original play were to wait upon a company, many decades would go without a cup-bearer," remains substantially true to the present day.

Whatever obloquy is cast upon Cibber for effecting so permanent a corruption of the text of the great national poet, there is no doubt that he was "wise in his generation," and that he did his work in a spirit of veneration for the Bard of Avon, of which not a trace is to be found in Dryden's *Tempest*. The scene between Gloster and Henry, terminating in the murder of the latter and the speech uttered by the king when dying on Bosworth Field, are at any rate Shakspeare's, though they are not to be found in Shakspeare's *Richard III.;* the former having been taken from the third part of *Henry VI.*, the latter from a speech by Northumberland in the second part of *Henry IV.* As for the soliloquy on conscience, it is pure Cibber.

It is an exceptional fact, that one portion of Shakspeare's play omitted by Cibber has gained as wide a popularity as the parts he has retained. This is Clarence's celebrated description of his own dream, which is to be found in all the collectanea of poetical "beauties" that have been compiled for the instruction of youth. We read that when the speech was heard for the first time on the stage, in 1821, it was received with much applause, and we might therefore be justified in assuming that by omitting it Cibber showed his deficiency not only in poetical feeling, but in worldly tact. But no doubt he reflected that Clarence is a comparatively insignificant personage, and that a long speech, not essential to the action of a play, is likely to be found tedious, when put into the mouth of a secondary actor. In 1821 Clarence's dream had all the charm of novelty, as far as the stage was concerned, and it is highly questionable whether the pleasure it caused would have been heightened by familiarity.

Macbeth, which was, it seems, played as Shakspeare wrote it by the Duke's company at Lincoln's Inn Fields, was shortly after their removal to Dorset Gardens, brought out as an "opera," that is to say, with mechanical accessories, and with those musical additions which have remained till the present time, the words of the choruses being chiefly taken from Middleton's play of the *Witch*. Davenant, who was the author of this version, altered the text without scruple, often without apparent motive, and even introduced new situations. For instance, Lady Macbeth, perpetually haunted by Duncan's ghost, urges her husband to resign his crown, and as the shade of Banquo is invisible to the lady, so by way of compensation is the ghost of Duncan invisible to Macbeth. It is a curious fact that when this "opera" was first produced at Dorset Gardens in 1672, Banquo was played by one actor and his ghost by another.

For more than eighty years Davenant's *Macbeth* retained possession of the stage, and the original text was so generally forgotten, that when David Garrick announced that, on the 7th January, 1744, he was about to revive *Macbeth* as originally written by Shakspeare, his rival Quin exclaimed with surprise, "What does he mean? Don't I play Macbeth as written by Shakspeare?" Garrick's reform did not extend to the

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abolition of the choruses, and it is to his restoration that we owe the form of *Macbeth* adopted at the present day. Davenant's version does not seem to have been revived after the restoration of the original play; but no manager save Mr. Phelps, of Sadler's Wells, has ventured to lay hands on the music. It should be remembered, that except in the caldron-scene, the choruses do not at all interfere with the action of the piece, but are sung between the acts; and that the caldron-scene itself is not one in which the actor expects to produce any great effect. There is no doubt that the old-fashioned music, popularly ascribed to Locke, affords pleasure to a great many persons, and probably it was the opinion both of Mr. Macready and of Mr. Charles Kean that by the omission of this comparatively harmless accessory some persons would be deprived of a gratification for which no very palpable compensation could be offered.

The fact is perhaps worth mentioning that at Covent Garden in the year 1773 Macbeth first appeared in Scottish attire, having till that time been universally dressed as a modern military officer. This early step towards a reformation of costume was made by Macklin, who played Macbeth on the occasion. The portrait of Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard playing Macbeth and his lady in the dresses of the eighteenth century must be familiar to many of our readers.

If in the case of *Richard III.* a sweeping alteration of Shakspeare was made to gratify the ambition of the actor—in the first instance Colley Cibber himself—*King Lear* was still more strangely metamorphosed by Nahum Tate, with a view of sparing the feelings of the public. Nahum Tate, one of the authors of the collection of psalms usually bound up with the Common Prayer-book, evidently thought it contrary to the principles of dramatic justice, that the old British king, who had done so very little wrong, should be visited with such awful calamity. The world as exhibited in the play was out of joint, and honest Nahum did not, like Hamlet, think it was a cursed spite, that he was born to set it right, but undertook the work of improvement with great complacency, and at last achieved a *King Lear* with a happy termination, which was brought out at Dorset Gardens in 1681. In the last scene of this notable version Lear is discovered asleep, with his head on Cordelia's lap, when a party of villanous soldiers enter with intent to murder them. Lear, jumping up and seizing a partizan, finds himself strong enough to knock down two of the ruffians, and is then assisted by the virtuous personages of the story, who rush upon the stage. All who deserve happiness are made happy, and Edgar, whose love for Cordelia is one of the chief points of interest in Tate's version, is rewarded with her hand.

Addison, in the *Spectator*, expresses his opinion that Tate's improvement has deprived the tragedy of half its beauty; but such was not the general view in the last century. "The public," said Dr. Johnson, "has decided in favour of Tate;" and so long was it assumed that Lear had been saved from an unhappy death by the voice of the nation, that in the *Biographia Dramatica* (published in 1812) the writer not only records the

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fact that "in spite of the sentiments of critics, the alteration still maintains its ground;" but adds the opinion, "it is far from certainty that the catastrophe as originally penned by Shakspeare could be borne by a modern audience."

Several attempts were made to modify Tate's version of *King Lear*. Garrick brought it out at Drury Lane in 1756, with what he called "restorations from Shakspeare;" and this improved version remained in possession of the stage for fifty years; for although in 1768 Colman attempted to effect a compromise between Shakspeare and Tate by abolishing the loves of Cordelia and Edgar, while he retained the happy catastrophe, the public were not to be baulked of the amatory tale, to which they had been accustomed, and Tate, as improved by Garrick, remained triumphant. As for a version made by John Kemble early in the present century, it was further removed from Shakspeare than Garrick's.

It was not till the year 1823, when the principal character was played by Mr. Edmund Kean, that Lear and Cordelia were allowed to die miserably as Shakspeare intended them, but even then the restoration of the original was confined to the fifth act, and Tate's love-scenes were retained. Under Mr. Macready's management of Covent Garden, Shakspeare's tragedy in its pristine shape was played for the first time since the days of Charles I. The good people died as in duty bound; Edgar's heart was unmoved by the charms of Cordelia, and, what was most surprising of all, the Fool reappeared, admirably represented by Miss P. Horton. Garrick had indeed contemplated the restoration of this long-omitted and eminently interesting part, but abandoned the idea as dangerous. Colman's thoughts once led him in the same direction; but in the preface to his unfortunate version, he expressed his conviction that such a character would not be endured on a modern stage. Even Mr. Genest, the anonymous author of the *Account of the British Stage* (published in 1832), though he is sometimes fanatical in the cause of Shakspeare, is of opinion that the Fool was properly omitted by Tate. No sooner, however, did this terrible Fool reappear, than he was heartily welcomed, nor would any manager at the present day dream of leaving him out. Both at the Princess's under Mr. Charles Kean, and at Sadler's Wells under Mr. Phelps, he was to be found as a matter of course.

With *Hamlet*, which we have seen was played as late as 1673 in a state of even greater integrity than at present, and with *Othello*, fewer liberties have been taken than with most of Shakspeare's plays. The most serious attempt at an alteration of the former was made by Garrick, who in 1772 produced a version at Drury Lane, in which the gravediggers and Osric were omitted, and which, endowed with a temporary popularity by the performance of the celebrated actor, remained on the stage for a few years after his retirement in 1776. But in 1780, the comic personages reasserted their ancient right to be seen, and we hear of no subsequent alteration. Neither are we aware that any attempt has been made to restore Fortinbras, whom we find at Dorset Gardens late in the seventeenth century, and

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to whom some German critics attach the utmost importance, insisting that as the man of action he stands in contrast to Hamlet as the man of contemplation, and is therefore required to carry out the full meaning of the poet. In spite, however, of all æsthetical reasoning, there is this practical objection to Fortinbras, in common with Clarence (in *Richard III.*), that he could not be assigned to an actor who would render him an interesting figure. To the poetical student objections of this kind appear simply abominable; but it may be observed once for all, that the interests of poetry and of the stage move in lines, which, however they may approximate, never entirely coalesce.

The *Merchant of Venice* was for a long time superseded by the *Jew of Venice*, an adaptation by Lord Lansdowne, brought out in 1701 at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, to which the principal actors of the time had seceded about six years before, in consequence of a quarrel with the patentees of the Theatre Royal. In this version Bassanio was considered the principal character, and was assigned to Betterton, while Shylock, regarded as a comic part, was represented by the low comedian Dogget, whose name is still familiar to the watermen of the Thames. The restoration of the tragic Shylock is due to Macklin, who revived the *Merchant of Venice* at Drury Lane in 1741, in opposition to the most experienced advisers, and achieved such a marvellous success by his performance of the Jew, that Lansdowne's piece was thenceforth banished from the stage. Pope's exclamation in reference to Macklin,—

> This is the Jew
> That Shakspeare drew,—

has almost passed into a proverb. For many years, however, the scenes in which Portia's unsuccessful suitors successively choose the wrong caskets were omitted, the close approximation to Shakspeare which is now made whenever the play is performed having been first effected by the managers of the present generation. The practical value of the restoration consists in the heightened development in the character of Portia, of which it is the occasion.

During the first quarter of this century, several of Shakspeare's comedies were produced in what was then considered an operatic form, and were rendered extremely popular by the music of Bishop and the singing of Miss Stephens and Miss M. Tree. The author of many, if not all, of these versions was Mr. Reynolds the dramatist, and his task generally consisted in the compression of five acts into three, and the introduction of songs, the words of which were usually Shakspeare's, though not perhaps belonging to the particular play in which they were sung. In these pieces the action was not essentially modified, and as they were rather abridgments than alterations, there is no need to review them in detail.

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The Small House at Allington.

CHAPTER XXXI.

The Wounded Fawn.

NEARLY two months passed away, and it was now Christmas time at Allington. It may be presumed that there was no intention at either house that the mirth should be very loud. Such a wound as that received by Lily Dale was one from which recovery could not be quick, and it was felt by all the family that a weight was upon them which made gaiety impracticable. As for Lily herself it may be said that she bore her misfortune with all a woman's courage. For the first week she stood up as a tree that stands against the wind, which is soon to be shivered to pieces because it will not bend. During that week her mother and sister were frightened by her calmness and endurance. She would perform her daily task. She would go out through the village, and appear at her place in church on the first Sunday. She would sit over her book of an evening, keeping back her tears; and would chide her mother and sister when she found that they were regarding her with earnest anxiety.

"Mamma, let it all be as though it had never been," she said.

"Ah, dear! if that were but possible!"

"God forbid that it should be possible inwardly," Lily replied. "But it is possible outwardly. I feel that you are more tender to me than you used to be, and that upsets me. If you would only scold me because I am idle, I should soon be better." But her mother could not speak to her as she perhaps might have spoken had no grief fallen upon her pet. She

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could not cease from those anxious tender glances which made Lily know that she was looked on as a fawn wounded almost to death.

At the end of the first week she gave way. "I won't get up, Bell," she said one morning, almost petulantly. "I am ill;—I had better lie here out of the way. Don't make a fuss about it. I'm stupid and foolish, and that makes me ill."

Thereupon Mrs. Dale and Bell were frightened, and looked into each other's blank faces, remembering stories of poor broken-hearted girls who had died because their loves had been unfortunate,—as small wax tapers whose lights are quenched if a breath of wind blows upon them too strongly. But then Lily was in truth no such slight taper as that. Nor was she the stem that must be broken because it will not bend. She bent herself to the blast during that week of illness, and then arose with her form still straight and graceful, and with her bright light unquenched.

After that she would talk more openly to her mother about her loss, —openly and with a true appreciation of the misfortune which had befallen her; but with an assurance of strength which seemed to ridicule the idea of a broken heart. "I know that I can bear it," she said, "and that I can bear it without lasting unhappiness. Of course I shall always love him, and must feel almost as you felt when you lost my father."

In answer to this Mrs. Dale could say nothing. She could not speak out her thoughts about Cresbie, and explain to Lily that he was unworthy of her love. Love does not follow worth, and is not given to excellence; —nor is it destroyed by ill-usage, nor killed by blows and mutilation. When Lily declared that she still loved the man who had so ill-used her, Mrs. Dale would be silent. Each perfectly understood the other, but on that matter even they could not interchange their thoughts with freedom.

"You must promise never to be tired of me, mamma," said Lily.

"Mothers do not often get tired of their children, whatever the children may do of their mothers."

"I'm not so sure of that when the children turn out old maids. And I mean to have a will of my own, too, mamma; and a way also, if it be possible. When Bell is married I shall consider it a partnership, and I shan't do what I'm told any longer."

"Forewarned will be forearmed."

"Exactly;—and I don't want to take you by surprise. For a year or two longer, till Bell is gone, I mean to be dutiful; but it would be very stupid for a person to be dutiful all their lives."

All of which Mrs. Dale understood thoroughly. It amounted to an assertion on Lily's part that she had loved once and could never love again; that she had played her game, hoping, as other girls hope, that she might win the prize of a husband; but that, having lost, she could never play the game again. It was that inward conviction on Lily's part which made her say such words to her mother. But Mrs. Dale would by no means allow herself to share this conviction. She declared to herself that

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time would cure Lily's wound, and that her child might yet be crowned by the bliss of a happy marriage. She would not in her heart consent to that plan in accordance with which Lily's destiny in life was to be regarded as already fixed. She had never really liked Crosbie as a suitor, and would herself have preferred John Eames, with all the faults of his hobbledehoyhood on his head. It might yet come to pass that John Eames' love might be made happy.

But in the meantime Lily, as I have said, had become strong in her courage, and recommenced the work of living with no lackadaisical self-assurance that because she had been made more unhappy than others, therefore she should allow herself to be more idle. Morning and night she prayed for him, and daily, almost hour by hour, she assured herself that it was still her duty to love him. It was hard, this duty of loving, without any power of expressing such love. But still she would do her duty. "Tell me at once, mamma," she said one morning, "when you hear that the day is fixed for his marriage. Pray don't keep me in the dark."

"It is to be in February," said Mrs. Dale.

"But let me know the day. It must not be to me like ordinary days. But do not look unhappy, mamma; I am not going to make a fool of myself. I shan't steal off and appear in the church like a ghost." And then, having uttered her little joke, a sob came, and she hid her face on her mother's bosom. In a moment she raised it again. "Believe me, mamma, that I am not unhappy," she said.

After the expiration of that second week Mrs. Dale did write a letter to Crosbie:

I suppose (she said) it is right that I should acknowledge the receipt of your letter. I do not know that I have aught else to say to you. It would not become me as a woman to say what I think of your conduct, but I believe that your conscience will tell you the same things. If it do not, you must, indeed, be hardened. I have promised my child that I will send to you a message from her. She bids me tell you that she has forgiven you, and that she does not hate you. May God also forgive you, and may you recover his love.

MARY DALE.

I beg that no rejoinder may be made to this letter, either to myself or to any of my family.

The squire wrote no answer to the letter which he had received, nor did he take any steps towards the immediate punishment of Crosbie. Indeed he had declared that no such steps could be taken, explaining to his nephew that such a man could be served only as one serves a rat.

"I shall never see him," he said once again; "if I did, I should not scruple to hit him on the head with my stick; but I should think ill of myself to go after him with such an object."

And yet it was a terrible sorrow to the old man that the scoundrel who had so injured him and his should escape scot-free. He had not forgiven Crosbie. No idea of forgiveness had ever crossed his mind. He

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would have hated himself had he thought it possible that he could be induced to forgive such an injury. "There is an amount of rascality in it,—of low meanness, which I do not understand," he would say over and over again to his nephew. And then as he would walk alone on the terrace he would speculate within his own mind whether Bernard would take any steps towards avenging his cousin's injury. "He is right," he would say to himself; "Bernard is quite right. But when I was young I could not have stood it. In those days a gentleman might have a fellow out who had treated him as he has treated us. A man was satisfied in feeling that he had done something. I suppose the world is different now-a-days." The world is different; but the squire by no means acknowledged in his heart that there had been any improvement.

Bernard also was greatly troubled in his mind. He would have had no objection to fight a duel with Crosbie, had duels in these days been possible. But he believed them to be no longer possible,—at any rate without ridicule. And if he could not fight the man, in what other way was he to punish him? Was it not the fact that for such a fault the world afforded no punishment? Was it not in the power of a man like Crosbie to amuse himself for a week or two at the expense of a girl's happiness for life, and then to escape absolutely without any ill effects to himself? "I shall be barred out of my club lest I should meet him," Bernard said to himself, "but he will not be barred out." Moreover, there was a feeling within him that the matter would be one of triumph to Crosbie rather than otherwise. In having secured for himself the pleasure of his courtship with such a girl as Lily Dale, without encountering the penalty usually consequent upon such amusement, he would be held by many as having merited much admiration. He had sinned against all the Dales, and yet the suffering arising from his sin was to fall upon the Dales exclusively. Such was Bernard's reasoning, as he speculated on the whole affair, sadly enough,—wishing to be avenged, but not knowing where to look for vengeance. For myself I believe him to have been altogether wrong as to the light in which he supposed that Crosbie's falsehood would be regarded by Crosbie's friends. Men will still talk of such things lightly, professing that all is fair in love as it is in war, and speaking almost with envy of the good fortunes of a practised deceiver. But I have never come across the man who thought in this way with reference to an individual case. Crosbie's own judgment as to the consequences to himself of what he had done was more correct than that formed by Bernard Dale. He had regarded the act as venial as long as it was still to do,—while it was still within his power to leave it undone; but from the moment of its accomplishment it had forced itself upon his own view in its proper light. He knew that he had been a scoundrel, and he knew that other men would so think of him. His friend Fowler Pratt, who had the reputation of looking at women simply as toys, had so regarded him. Instead of boasting of what he had done, he was as afraid of alluding to any matter connected with his marriage as a man is of talking

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of the articles which he has stolen. He had already felt that men at his club looked askance at him; and, though he was no coward as regarded his own skin and bones, he had an undefined fear lest some day he might encounter Bernard Dale purposely armed with a stick. The squire and his nephew were wrong in supposing that Crosbie was unpunished.

And as the winter came on he felt that he was closely watched by the noble family of De Courcy. Some of that noble family he had already learned to hate cordially. The Honourable John came up to town in November and persecuted him vilely;—insisted on having dinners given to him at Sebright's, of smoking throughout the whole afternoon in his future brother-in-law's rooms, and on borrowing his future brother-in-law's possessions; till at last Crosbie determined that it would be wise to quarrel with the Honourable John,—and he quarrelled with him accordingly, turning him out of his rooms, and telling him in so many words that he would have no more to do with him.

"You'll have to do it, as I did," Mortimer Gazebee had said to him; "I didn't like it because of the family, but Lady Amelia told me that it must be so." Whereupon Crosbie took the advice of Mortimer Gazebee.

But the hospitality of the Gazebees was perhaps more distressing to him than even the importunities of the Honourable John. It seemed as though his future sister-in-law was determined not to leave him alone. Mortimer was sent to fetch him up for the Sunday afternoons, and he found that he was constrained to go to the villa in St. John's Wood, even in opposition to his own most strenuous will. He could not quite analyze the circumstances of his own position, but he felt as though he were a cock with his spurs cut off,—as a dog with his teeth drawn. He found himself becoming humble and meek. He had to acknowledge to himself that he was afraid of Lady Amelia, and almost even afraid of Mortimer Gazebee. He was aware that they watched him, and knew all his goings out and comings in. They called him Adolphus, and made him tame. That coming evil day in February was dinned into his ears. Lady Amelia would go and look at furniture for him, and talked by the hour about bedding and sheets. "You had better get your kitchen things at Tomkins'. They're all good, and he'll give you ten per cent. off if you pay him ready money,—which of course you will, you know!" Was it for this that he had sacrificed Lily Dale?—for this that he had allied himself with the noble house of De Courcy?

Mortimer had been at him about the settlements from the very first moment of his return to London, and had already bound him up hand and foot. His life was insured, and the policy was in Mortimer's hands. His own little bit of money had been already handed over to be tied up with Lady Alexandrina's little bit. It seemed to him that in all the arrangements made the intention was that he should die off speedily, and that Lady Alexandrina should be provided with a decent little income, sufficient for St. John's Wood. Things were to be so settled that he could

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not even spend the proceeds of his own money, or of hers. They were to go, under the fostering hand of Mortimer Gazebee, in paying insurances. If he would only die the day after his marriage, there would really be a very nice sum of money for Alexandrina, almost worthy of the acceptance of an earl's daughter. Six months ago he would have considered himself able to turn Mortimer Gazebee round his finger on any subject that could be introduced between them. When they chanced to meet Gazebee had been quite humble to him, treating him almost as a superior being. He had looked down on Gazebee from a very great height. But now it seemed as though he were powerless in this man's hands.

But perhaps the countess had become his greatest aversion. She was perpetually writing to him little notes in which she gave him multitudes of commissions, sending him about as though he had been her servant. And she pestered him with advice which was even worse than her commissions, telling him of the style of life in which Alexandrina would expect to live, and warning him very frequently that such an one as he could not expect to be admitted within the bosom of so noble a family without paying very dearly for that inestimable privilege. Her letters had become odious to him, and he would chuck them on one side, leaving them for the whole day unopened. He had already made up his mind that he would quarrel with the countess also, very shortly after his marriage; indeed, that he would separate himself from the whole family if it were possible. And yet he had entered into this engagement mainly with the view of reaping those advantages which would accrue to him from being allied to the De Courcys! The squire and his nephew were wretched in thinking that this man was escaping without punishment, but they might have spared themselves that misery.

It had been understood from the first that he was to spend his Christmas at Courcy Castle. From this undertaking it was quite out of his power to enfranchise himself; but he resolved that his visit should be as short as possible. Christmas Day unfortunately came on a Monday, and it was known to the De Courcy world that Saturday was almost a *dies non* at the General Committee Office. As to those three days there was no escape for him; but he made Alexandrina understand that the three Commissioners were men of iron as to any extension of those three days. "I must be absent again in February, of course," he said, almost making his wail audible in the words he used, "and therefore it is quite impossible that I should stay now beyond the Monday." Had there been attractions for him at Courcy Castle I think he might have arranged with Mr. Optimist for a week or ten days. "We shall be all alone," the countess wrote to him, "and I hope you will have an opportunity of learning more of our ways than you have ever really been able to do as yet." This was bitter as gall to him. But in this world all valuable commodities have their price; and when men such as Crosbie aspire to obtain for themselves an alliance with noble families, they must pay the market price for the article which they purchase.

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"You'll all come up and dine with us on Monday," the squire said to Mrs. Dale, about the middle of the previous week.

"Well, I think not," said Mrs. Dale; "we are better, perhaps, as we are."

At this moment the squire and his sister-in-law were on much more friendly terms than had been usual with them, and he took her reply in good part, understanding her feeling. Therefore, he pressed his request, and succeeded.

"I think you're wrong," he said; "I don't suppose that we shall have a very merry Christmas. You and the girls will hardly have that, whether you eat your pudding here or at the Great House. But it will be better for us all to make the attempt. It's the right thing to do. That's the way I look at it."

"I'll ask Lily," said Mrs. Dale.

"Do, do. Give her my love, and tell her from me that, in spite of all that has come and gone, Christmas Day should still be to her a day of rejoicing. We'll dine about three, so that the servants can have the afternoon."

"Of course we'll go," said Lily; "why not? We always do. And we'll have blind-man's-buff with all the Boyces, as we had last year, if uncle will ask them up." But the Boyces were not asked up for that occasion.

But Lily, though she put on it all so brave a face, had much to suffer, and did in truth suffer greatly. If you, my reader, ever chanced to slip into the gutter on a wet day, did you not find that the sympathy of the bystanders was by far the severest part of your misfortune? Did you not declare to yourself that all might yet be well, if the people would only walk on and not look at you? And yet you cannot blame those who stood and pitied you; or, perhaps, essayed to rub you down, and assist you in the recovery of your bedaubed hat. You, yourself, if you see a man fall, cannot walk by as though nothing uncommon had happened to him. It was so with Lily. The people of Allington could not regard her with their ordinary eyes. They would look at her tenderly, knowing that she was a wounded fawn, and thus they aggravated the soreness of her wound. Old Mrs. Hearn condoled with her, telling her that very likely she would be better off as she was. Lily would not lie about it in any way. "Mrs. Hearn," she said, "the subject is painful to me." Mrs. Hearn said no more about it, but on every meeting between them she looked the things she did not say. "Miss Lily!" said Hopkins, one day, "Miss Lily!"—and as he looked up into her face a tear had almost formed itself in his old eye—"I knew what he was from the first. Oh, dear! oh, dear! if I could have had him killed!" "Hopkins, how dare you?" said Lily. "If you speak to me again in such a way, I will tell my uncle." She turned away from him; but immediately turned back again, and put out her little hand to him. "I beg your pardon," she said. "I know how kind you are, and I love you for it." And then

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she went away. "I'll go after him yet, and break the dirty neck of him," said Hopkins to himself, as he walked down the path.

Shortly before Christmas day she called, with her sister, at the vicarage. Bell, in the course of the visit, left the room with one of the Boyce girls, to look at the last chrysanthemums of the year. Then Mrs. Boyce took advantage of the occasion to make her little speech. "My dear Lily," she said, "you will think me cold if I do not say one word to you." "No, I shall not," said Lily, almost sharply, shrinking from the finger that threatened to touch her sore. "There are things which should never be talked about." "Well, well; perhaps so," said Mrs. Boyce. But for a minute or two she was unable to fall back upon any other topic, and sat looking at Lily with painful tenderness. I need hardly say what were Lily's sufferings under such a gaze; but she bore it, acknowledging to herself in her misery that the fault did not lay with Mrs. Boyce. How could Mrs. Boyce have looked at her otherwise than tenderly?

It was settled, then, that Lily was to dine up at the Great House on Christmas Day, and thus show to the Allington world that she was not to be regarded as a person shut out from the world by the depth of her misfortune. That she was right there can, I think, be no doubt; but as she walked across the little bridge, with her mother and sister, after returning from church, she would have given much to be able to have turned round, and have gone to bed instead of to her uncle's dinner.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Pawkins's in Jermyn Street.

The show of fat beasts in London took place this year on the twentieth day of December, and I have always understood that a certain bullock exhibited by Lord De Guest was declared by the metropolitan butchers to have realized all the possible excellences of breeding, feeding, and condition. No doubt the butchers of the next half-century will have learned much better, and the Guestwick beast, could it be embalmed and then produced, would excite only ridicule at the agricultural ignorance of the present age; but Lord De Guest took the praise that was offered to him, and found himself in a seventh heaven of delight. He was never so happy as when surrounded by butchers, graziers, and salesmen who were able to appreciate the work of his life, and who regarded him as a model nobleman. "Look at that fellow," he said to Eames, pointing to the prize bullock. Eames had joined his patron at the show after his office hours, looking on upon the living beef by gaslight. "Isn't he like his sire? He was got by Lambkin, you know."

"Lambkin," said Johnny, who had not as yet been able to learn much about the Guestwick stock.

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"Yes, Lambkin. The bull that we had the trouble with. He has just got his sire's back and fore-quarters. Don't you see?"

"I daresay," said Johnny, who looked very hard, but could not see.

"It's very odd," exclaimed the earl, "but do you know, that bull has been as quiet since that day,—as quiet as—as anything. I think it must have been my pocket-handkerchief."

"I daresay it was," said Johnny;—"or perhaps the flies."

"Flies!" said the earl, angrily. "Do you suppose he isn't used to flies? Come away. I ordered dinner at seven, and it's past six now. My brother-in-law, Colonel Dale, is up in town, and he dines with us." So he took Johnny's arm, and led him off through the show, calling his attention as he went to several beasts which were inferior to his own.

And then they walked down through Portman Square and Grosvenor Square, and across Piccadilly to Jermyn Street. John Eames acknowledged to himself that it was odd that he should have an earl leaning on his arm as he passed along through the streets. At home, in his own life, his daily companions were Cradell and Amelia Roper, Mrs. Lupex and Mrs. Roper. The difference was very great, and yet he found it quite as easy to talk to the earl as to Mrs. Lupex.

"You know the Dales down at Allington of course," said the earl.

"Oh, yes, I know them."

"But, perhaps, you never met the colonel."

"I don't think I ever did."

"He's a queer sort of fellow;—very well in his way, but he never does anything. He and my sister live at Torquay, and as far as I can find out they neither of them have any occupation of any sort. He's come up to town now because we both had to meet our family lawyers and sign some papers, but he looks on the journey as a great hardship. As for me, I'm a year older than he is, but I wouldn't mind going up and down from Guestwick every day."

"It's looking after the bull that does it," said Eames.

"By George! you're right, Master Johnny. My sister and Crofts may tell me what they like, but when a man's out in the open air for eight or nine hours every day, it doesn't much matter where he goes to sleep after that. This is Pawkins',—capital good house, but not so good as it used to be while old Pawkins was alive. Show Mr. Eames up into a bedroom to wash his hands."

Colonel Dale was much like his brother in face, but was taller, even thinner, and apparently older. When Eames went into the sitting-room, the colonel was there alone, and had to take upon himself the trouble of introducing himself. He did not get up from his arm-chair, but nodded gently at the young man. "Mr. Eames, I believe? I knew your father at Guestwick, a great many years ago;" then he turned his face back towards the fire and sighed.

"It's got very cold this afternoon," said Johnny, trying to make conversation.

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"It's always cold in London," said the colonel.

"If you had to be here in August you wouldn't say so."

"God forbid," said the colonel, and he sighed again, with his eyes fixed upon the fire. Eames had heard of the very gallant way in which Orlando Dale had persisted in running away with Lord De Guest's sister, in opposition to very terrible obstacles, and as he now looked at the intrepid lover, he thought that there must have been a great change since those days. After that nothing more was said till the earl came down.

Pawkins' house was thoroughly old-fashioned in all things, and the Pawkins of that day himself stood behind the earl's elbow when the dinner began, and himself removed the cover from the soup tureen. Lord De Guest did not require much personal attention, but he would have felt annoyed if this hadn't been done. As it was he had a civil word to say to Pawkins about the fat cattle, thereby showing that he did not mistake Pawkins for one of the waiters. Pawkins then took his lordship's orders about the wine and retired.

"He keeps up the old house pretty well," said the earl to his brother-in-law. "It isn't like what it was thirty years ago, but then everything of that sort has got worse and worse."

"I suppose it has," said the colonel.

"I remember when old Pawkins had as good a glass of port as I've got at home,—or nearly. They can't get it now, you know."

"I never drink port," said the colonel. "I seldom take anything after dinner, except a little negus."

His brother-in-law said nothing, but made a most eloquent grimace as he turned his face towards his soup-plate. Eames saw it and could hardly refrain from laughing. When, at half-past nine o'clock, the colonel retired from the room, the earl, as the door was closed, threw up his hands, and uttered the one word "negus!" Then Eames took heart of grace and had his laughter out.

The dinner was very dull, and before the colonel went to bed Johnny regretted that he had been induced to dine at Pawkins'. It might be a very fine thing to be asked to dinner with an earl, and John Eames had perhaps received at his office some little accession of dignity from the circumstances, of which he had been not unpleasantly aware; but, as he sat at the table, on which there were four or five apples and a plate of dried nuts, looking at the earl, as he endeavoured to keep his eyes open, and at the colonel, to whom it seemed absolutely a matter of indifference whether his companions were asleep or awake, he confessed to himself that the price he was paying was almost too dear. Mrs. Roper's tea-table was not pleasant to him, but even that would have been preferable to the black dinginess of Pawkins' mahogany, with the company of two tired old men, with whom he seemed to have no mutual subject of conversation. Once or twice he tried a word with the colonel, for the colonel sat with his eyes open looking at the fire. But he was answered with monosyllables,

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and it was evident to him that the colonel did not wish to talk. To sit still, with his hands closed over each other on his lap, was work enough for Colonel Dale during his after-dinner hours.

But the earl knew what was going on. During that terrible conflict between him and his slumber, in which the drowsy god fairly vanquished him for some twenty minutes, his conscience was always accusing him of treating his guests badly. He was very angry with himself, and tried to arouse himself and talk. But his brother-in-law would not help him in his efforts; and even Eames was not bright in rendering him assistance. Then for twenty minutes he slept soundly, and at the end of that he woke himself with one of his own snorts. "By George!" he said, jumping up and standing on the rug, "we'll have some coffee;" and after that he did not sleep any more.

"Dale," said he, "won't you take some more wine?"

"Nothing more," said the colonel, still looking at the fire, and shaking his head very slowly.

"Come, Johnny, fill your glass." He had already got into the way of calling his young friend Johnny, having found that Mrs. Eames generally spoke of her son by that name.

"I have been filling my glass all the time," said Eames, taking the decanter again in his hand as he spoke.

"I'm glad you've found something to amuse you, for it has seemed to me that you and Dale haven't had much to say to each other. I've been listening all the time."

"You've been asleep," said the colonel.

"Then there's been some excuse for my holding my tongue," said the earl. "By-the-by, Dale, what do you think of that fellow Crosbie?"

Eames' ears were instantly on the alert, and the spirit of dulness vanished from him.

"Think of him?" said the colonel.

"He ought to have every bone in his skin broken," said the earl.

"So he ought," said Eames, getting up from his chair in his eagerness, and speaking in a tone somewhat louder than was perhaps becoming in the presence of his seniors. "So he ought, my lord. He is the most abominable rascal that ever I met in my life. I wish I was Lily Dale's brother." Then he sat down again, remembering that he was speaking in the presence of Lily's uncle, and of the father of Bernard Dale, who might be supposed to occupy the place of Lily's brother.

The colonel turned his head round, and looked at the young man with surprise. "I beg your pardon, sir," said Eames, "but I have known Mrs. Dale and your nieces all my life."

"Oh, have you?" said the colonel. "Nevertheless it is, perhaps, as well not to make too free with a young lady's name. Not that I blame you in the least, Mr. Eames."

"I should think not," said the earl. "I honour him for his feeling. Johnny, my boy, if ever I am unfortunate enough to meet that man I

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shall tell him my mind, and I believe you will do the same." On hearing this John Eames winked at the earl, and made a motion with his head towards the colonel, whose back was turned to him. And then the earl winked back at Eames.

"De Guest," said the colonel, "I think I'll go upstairs; I always have a little arrowroot in my own room."

"I'll ring the bell for a candle," said the host. Then the colonel went, and as the door was closed behind him, the earl raised his two hands and uttered that single word, "negus!" Whereupon Johnny burst out laughing, and coming round to the fire, sat himself down in the arm-chair which the colonel had left.

"I've no doubt it's all right," said the earl; "but I shouldn't like to drink negus myself, nor yet to have arrowroot up in my bedroom."

"I don't suppose there's any harm in it."

"Oh, dear, no; I wonder what Pawkins says about him. But I suppose they have them of all sorts in an hotel."

"The waiter didn't seem to think much of it when he brought it."

"No, no. If he'd asked for senna and salts, the waiter wouldn't have showed any surprise. By-the-by, you touched him up about that poor girl."

"Did I, my lord? I didn't mean it."

"You see he's Bernard Dale's father, and the question is, whether Bernard shouldn't punish the fellow for what he has done. Somebody ought to do it. It isn't right that he should escape. Somebody ought to let Mr. Crosbie know what a scoundrel he has made himself."

"I'd do it to-morrow, only I'm afraid——"

"No, no, no," said the earl; "you are not the right person at all. What have you got to do with it? You've merely known them as family friends, but that's not enough."

"No, I suppose not," said Eames, sadly.

"Perhaps it's best as it is," said the earl. "I don't know that any good would be got by knocking him over the head. And if we are to be Christians, I suppose we ought to be Christians."

"What sort of a Christian has he been?"

"That's true enough; and if I was Bernard, I should be very apt to forget my Bible lessons about meekness."

"Do you know, my lord, I should think it the most Christian thing in the world to pitch into him; I should, indeed. There are some things for which a man ought to be beaten black and blue."

"So that he shouldn't do them again?"

"Exactly. You might say it isn't Christian to hang a man."

"I'd always hang a murderer. It wasn't right to hang men for stealing sheep."

"Much better hang such a fellow as Crosbie," said Eames.

"Well, I believe so. If any fellow wanted now to curry favour with the young lady, what an opportunity he'd have."

Johnny remained silent for a moment or two before he answered.

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"I'm not so sure of that," he said, mournfully, as though grieving at the thought that there was no chance of currying favour with Lily by thrashing her late lover.

"I don't pretend to know much about girls," said Lord De Guest; "but I should think it would be so. I should fancy that nothing would please her so much as hearing that he had caught it, and that all the world knew that he'd caught it." The earl had declared that he didn't know much about girls, and in so saying, he was no doubt right.

"If I thought so," said Eames, "I'd find him out to-morrow."

"Why so? what difference does it make to you?" Then there was another pause, during which Johnny looked very sheepish. "You don't mean to say that you're in love with Miss Lily Dale?"

"I don't know much about being in love with her," said Johnny, turning very red as he spoke. And then he made up his mind, in a wild sort of way, to tell all the truth to his friend. Pawkins' port wine may, perhaps, have had something to do with the resolution. "But I'd go through fire and water for her, my lord. I knew her years before he had ever seen her, and have loved her a great deal better than he will ever love any one. When I heard that she had accepted him, I had half a mind to cut my own throat,—or else his."

"Highty tighty," said the earl.

"It's very ridiculous, I know," said Johnny, "and of course she would never have accepted me."

"I don't see that at all."

"I haven't a shilling in the world."

"Girls don't care much for that."

"And then a clerk in the Income-tax Office! It's such a poor thing."

"The other fellow was only a clerk in another office."

The earl living down at Guestwick did not understand that the Income-tax Office in the city, and the General Committee Office at Whitehall, were as far apart as Dives and Lazarus, and separated by as impassable a gulf.

"Oh, yes," said Johnny; "but his office is another kind of thing, and then he was a swell himself."

"By George, I don't see it," said the earl.

"I don't wonder a bit at her accepting a fellow like that. I hated him the first moment I saw him; but that's no reason she should hate him. He had that sort of manner, you know. He was a swell, and girls like that kind of thing. I never felt angry with her, but I could have eaten him." As he spoke he looked as though he would have made some such attempt had Crosbie been present.

"Did you ever ask her to have you?" said the earl.

"No; how could I ask her, when I hadn't bread to give her?"

"And you never told her——that you were in love with her I mean, and all that kind of thing?"

"She knows it now," said Johnny; "I went to say good-by to her

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the other day,—when I thought she was going to be married. I could not help telling her then."

"But it seems to me, my dear fellow, that you ought to be very much obliged to Crosbie;—that is to say, if you've a mind to——"

"I know what you mean, my lord. I am not a bit obliged to him. It's my belief that all this will about kill her. As to myself, if I thought she'd ever have me——"

Then he was again silent, and the earl could see that the tears were in his eyes.

"I think I begin to understand it," said the earl, "and I'll give you a bit of advice. You come down and spend your Christmas with me at Guestwick."

"Oh, my lord!"

"Never mind my-lording me, but do as I tell you. Lady Julia sent you a message, though I forgot all about it till now. She wants to thank you herself for what you did in the field."

"That's all nonsense, my lord."

"Very well; you can tell her so. You may take my word for this, too,—my sister hates Crosbie quite as much as you do. I think she'd 'pitch into him,' as you call it, herself, if she knew how. You come down to Guestwick for the Christmas, and then go over to Allington and tell them all plainly what you mean."

"I couldn't say a word to her now."

"Say it to the squire, then. Go to him, and tell him what you mean, —holding your head up like a man. Don't talk to me about swells. The man who means honestly is the best swell I know. He's the only swell I recognize. Go to old Dale, and say you come from me,—from Guestwick Manor. Tell him that if he'll put a little stick under the pot to make it boil, I'll put a bigger one. He'll understand what that means."

"Oh, no, my lord."

"But I say, oh, yes;" and the earl, who was now standing on the rug before the fire, dug his hands deep down into his trousers' pockets. "I'm very fond of that girl, and would do much for her. You ask Lady Julia if I didn't say so to her before I ever knew of your casting a sheep's-eye that way. And I've a sneaking kindness for you too, Master Johnny. Lord bless you, I knew your father as well as I ever knew any man; and to tell the truth, I believe I helped to ruin him. He held land of me you know, and there can't be any doubt that he did ruin himself. He knew no more about a beast when he'd done, than—than—than that waiter. If he'd gone on to this day he wouldn't have been any wiser."

Johnny sat silent, with his eyes full of tears. What was he to say to his friend?

"You come down with me," continued the earl, "and you'll find we'll make it all straight. I daresay you're right about not speaking to the girl just at present. But tell everything to the uncle, and then to the mother. And, above all things, never think that you're not good enough

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yourself. A man should never think that. My belief is that in life people will take you very much at your own reckoning. If you are made of dirt, like that fellow Crosbie, you'll be found out at last, no doubt. But then I don't think you are made of dirt."

"I hope not."

"And so do I. You can come down, I suppose, with me the day after to-morrow?"

"I'm afraid not. I have had all my leave."

"Shall I write to old Buffle, and ask it as a favour."

"No," said Johnny; "I shouldn't like that. But I'll see to-morrow, and then I'll let you know. I can go down by the mail-train on Saturday, at any rate."

"That won't be comfortable. See and come with me if you can. Now, good-night, my dear fellow, and remember this,—when I say a thing I mean it. I think I may boast that I never yet went back from my word."

The earl as he spoke gave his left hand to his guest, and looking somewhat grandly up over the young man's head, he tapped his own breast thrice with his right hand. As he went through the little scene, John Eames felt that he was every inch an earl.

"I don't know what to say to you, my lord."

"Say nothing,—not a word more to me. But say to yourself that faint heart never won fair lady. Good-night, my dear boy, good-night. I dine out to-morrow, but you can call and let me know at about six."

Eames then left the room without another word, and walked out into the cold air of Jermyn Street. The moon was clear and bright, and the pavement in the shining light seemed to be as clean as a lady's hand. All the world was altered to him since he had entered Pawkins' Hotel. Was it then possible that Lily Dale might even yet become his wife? Could it be true that he, even now, was in a position to go boldly to the Squire of Allington, and tell him what were his views with reference to Lily? And how far would he be justified in taking the earl at his word? Some incredible amount of wealth would be required before he could marry Lily Dale. Two or three hundred pounds a year at the very least! The earl could not mean him to understand that any such sum as that would be made up with such an object! Nevertheless he resolved as he walked home to Burton Crescent that he would go down to Guestwick, and that he would obey the earl's behest. As regarded Lily herself he felt that nothing could be said to her for many a long day as yet.

"Oh, John, how late you are!" said Amelia, slipping out from the back parlour as he let himself in with his latch key.

"Yes; I am;—very late," said John, taking his candle, and passing her by on the stairs without another word.

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CHAPTER XXXIII.

"The Time will Come."

"Did you hear that young Eames is staying at Guestwick Manor?"

As these were the first words which the squire spoke to Mrs. Dale as they walked together up to the Great House, after church, on Christmas Day, it was clear enough that the tidings of Johnny's visit, when told to him, had made some impression.

"At Guestwick Manor!" said Mrs. Dale. "Dear me! Do you hear that, Bell? There's promotion for Master Johnny!"

"Don't you remember, mamma," said Bell, "that he helped his lordship in his trouble with the bull?"

Lily, who remembered accurately all the passages of her last interview with John Eames, said nothing, but felt, in some sort, sore at the idea that he should be so near her at such a time. In some unconscious way she had liked him for coming to her and saying all that he did say. She valued him more highly after that scene than she did before. But now, she would feel herself injured and hurt if he ever made his way into her presence under circumstances as they existed.

"I should not have thought that Lord De Guest was the man to show so much gratitude for so slight a favour," said the squire. "However, I'm going to dine there to-morrow."

"To meet young Eames?" said Mrs. Dale.

"Yes,—especially to meet young Eames. At least, I've been very specially asked to come, and I've been told that he is to be there."

"And is Bernard going?"

"Indeed I'm not," said Bernard. "I shall come over and dine with you."

A half-formed idea flitted across Lily's mind, teaching her to imagine for a moment that she might possibly be concerned in this arrangement. But the thought vanished as quickly as it came, merely leaving some soreness behind it. There are certain maladies which make the whole body sore. The patient, let him be touched on any point,—let him even be nearly touched,—will roar with agony as though his whole body had been bruised. So is it also with maladies of the mind. Sorrows such as that of poor Lily's leave the heart sore at every point, and compel the sufferer to be ever in fear of new wounds. Lily bore her cross bravely and well; but not the less did it weigh heavily upon her at every turn because she had the strength to walk as though she did not bear it. Nothing happened to her, or in her presence, that did not in some way connect itself with her misery. Her uncle was going over to meet John Eames at Lord De Guest's. Of course the men there would talk about her, and all such talking was an injury to her.

The afternoon of that day did not pass away brightly. As long as

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the servants were in the room the dinner went on much as other dinners. At such times a certain amount of hypocrisy must always be practised in closely domestic circles. At mixed dinner-parties people can talk before Richard and William the same words that they would use if Richard and William were not there. People so mixed do not talk together their inward home thoughts. But when close friends are together a little conscious reticence is practised till the door is tiled. At such a meeting as this that conscious reticence was of service, and created an effort which was salutary. When the door was tiled, and when the servants were gone, how could they be merry together? By what mirth should the beards be made to wag on that Christmas Day?

"My father has been up in town," said Bernard. "He was with Lord De Guest at Pawkins'."

"Why didn't you go and see him?" asked Mrs. Dale.

"Well, I don't know. He did not seem to wish it. I shall go down to Torquay in February. I must be up in London, you know, in a fortnight, for good." Then they were all silent again for a few minutes. If Bernard could have owned the truth he would have acknowledged that he had not gone up to London, because he did not yet know how to treat Crosbie when he should meet him. His thoughts on this matter threw some sort of shadow across poor Lily's mind, making her feel that her wound was again opened.

"I want him to give up his profession altogether," said the squire, speaking firmly and slowly. "It would be better, I think, for both of us that he should do so."

"Would it be wise at his time of life," said Mrs. Dale, "and when he has been doing so well?"

"I think it would be wise. If he were my son it would be thought better that he should live here upon the property, among the people who are to become his tenants, than remain up in London, or perhaps be sent to India. He has one profession as the heir of this place, and that, I think, should be enough."

"I should have but an idle life of it down here," said Bernard.

"That would be your own fault. But if you did as I would have you, your life would not be idle." In this he was alluding to Bernard's proposed marriage, but as to that nothing further could be said in Bell's presence. Bell understood it all, and sat quite silent, with demure countenance;—perhaps even with something of sternness in her face.

"But the fact is," said Mrs. Dale, speaking in a low tone, and having well considered what she was about to say, "that Bernard is not exactly the same as your son."

"Why not?" said the squire. "I have even offered to settle the property on him if he will leave the service."

"You do not owe him so much as you would owe your son; and, therefore, he does not owe you as much as he would owe his father."

"If you mean that I cannot constrain him, I know that well enough.

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As regards money I have offered to do for him quite as much as any father would feel called upon to do for an only son."

"I hope you don't think me ungrateful," said Bernard.

"No, I do not; but I think you unmindful. I have nothing more to say about it, however;—not about that. If you should marry——" And then he stopped himself, feeling that he could not go on in Bell's presence.

"If he should marry," said Mrs. Dale, "it may well be that his wife would like a house of her own."

"Wouldn't she have this house?" said the squire, angrily. "Isn't it big enough? I only want one room for myself, and I'd give up that if it were necessary."

"That's nonsense," said Mrs. Dale.

"It isn't nonsense," said the squire.

"You'll be squire of Allington for the next twenty years," said Mrs. Dale. "And as long as you are the squire, you'll be master of this house; at least, I hope so. I don't approve of monarchs abdicating in favour of young people."

"I don't think uncle Christopher would look at all well like Charles the Fifth," said Lily.

"I would always keep a cell for you, my darling, if I did," said the squire, regarding her with that painful, special tenderness. Lily, who was sitting next to Mrs. Dale, put her hand out secretly and got hold of her mother's, thereby indicating that she did not intend to occupy the cell offered to her by her uncle; or to look to him as the companion of her monastic seclusion. After that there was nothing more then said as to Bernard's prospects.

"Mrs. Hearn is dining at the vicarage, I suppose?" asked the squire.

"Yes; she went in after church," said Bell. "I saw her go with Mrs. Boyce."

"She told me she never would dine with them again after dark in winter," said Mrs. Dale. "The last time she was there, the boy let the lamp blow out as she was going home, and she lost her way. The truth was, she was angry because Mr. Boyce didn't go with her."

"She's always angry," said the squire. "She hardly speaks to me now. When she paid her rent the other day to Jolliffe, she said she hoped it would do me much good; as though she thought me a brute for taking it."

"So she does," said Bernard.

"She's very old, you know," said Bell.

"I'd give her the house for nothing, if I were you, uncle," said Lily.

"No, my dear; if you were me you would not. I should be very wrong to do so. Why should Mrs. Hearn have her house for nothing, any more than her meat or her clothes? It would be much more reasonable were I to give her so much money into her hand yearly; but it would be wrong in me to do so, seeing that she is not an object of charity;—and it would be wrong in her to take it"

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"And she wouldn't take it," said Mrs. Dale.

"I don't think she would. But if she did, I'm sure she would grumble because it wasn't double the amount. And if Mr. Boyce had gone home with her, she would have grumbled because he walked too fast."

"She is very old," said Bell, again.

"But, nevertheless, she ought to know better than to speak disparagingly of me to my servants. She should have more respect for herself." And the squire showed by the tone of his voice that he thought very much about it.

It was very long and very dull that Christmas evening, making Bernard feel strongly that he would be very foolish to give up his profession, and tie himself down to a life at Allington. Women are more accustomed than men to long, dull, unemployed hours; and, therefore, Mrs. Dale and her daughters bore the tedium courageously. While he yawned, stretched himself, and went in and out of the room, they sat demurely, listening as the squire laid down the law on small matters, and contradicting him occasionally when the spirit of either of them prompted her specially to do so. "Of course you know much better than I do," he would say. "Not at all," Mrs. Dale would answer. "I don't pretend to know anything about it. But——" So the evening wore itself away; and when the squire was left alone at half-past nine, he did not feel that the day had passed badly with him. That was his style of life, and he expected no more from it than he got. He did not look to find things very pleasant, and, if not happy, he was, at any rate, contented.

"Only think of Johnny Eames being at Guestwick Manor!" said Bell, as they were going home.

"I don't see why he shouldn't be there," said Lily. "I would rather it should be he than I, because Lady Julia is so grumpy."

"But asking your uncle Christopher especially to meet him!" said Mrs. Dale. "There must be some reason for it." Then Lily felt the soreness come upon her again, and spoke no further upon the subject.

We all know that there was a special reason, and that Lily's soreness was not false in its mysterious forebodings. Eames, on the evening after his dinner at Pawkins', had seen the earl, and explained to him that he could not leave town till the Saturday evening; but that he could remain over the Tuesday. He must be at his office by twelve on Wednesday, and could manage to do that by an early train from Guestwick.

"Very well, Johnny," said the earl, talking to his young friend with the bedroom candle in his hand, as he was going up to dress. "Then I'll tell you what; I've been thinking of it. I'll ask Dale to come over to dinner on Tuesday; and if he'll come, I'll explain the whole matter to him myself. He's a man of business, and he'll understand. If he won't come, why then you must go over to Allington, and find him, if you can, on the Tuesday morning; or I'll go to him myself, which will be better. You mustn't keep me now, as I am ever so much too late."

Eames did not attempt to keep him, but went away feeling that the

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whole matter was being arranged for him in a very wonderful way. And when he got to Allington he found that the squire had accepted the earl's invitation. Then he declared to himself that there was no longer any possibility of retractation for him. Of course he did not wish to retract. The one great longing of his life was to call Lily Dale his own. But he felt afraid of the squire,—that the squire would despise him and snub him, and that the earl would perceive that he had made a mistake when he saw how his client was scorned and snubbed. It was arranged that the earl was to take the squire into his own room for a few minutes before dinner, and Johnny felt that he would be hardly able to stand his ground in the drawing-room when the two old men should make their appearance together.

He got on very well with Lady Julia, who gave herself no airs, and made herself very civil. Her brother had told her the whole story, and she felt as anxious as he did to provide Lily with another husband in place of that horrible man Crosbie. "She has been very fortunate in her escape," she said to her brother; "very fortunate." The earl agreed with this, saying that in his opinion his own favourite Johnny would make much the nicer lover of the two. But Lady Julia had her doubts as to Lily's acquiescence. "But, Theodore, he must not speak to Miss Lilian Dale herself about it yet a while."

"No," said the earl; "not for a month or so."

"He will have a better chance if he can remain silent for six months," said Lady Julia.

"Bless my soul! somebody else will have picked her up before that," said the earl.

In answer to this Lady Julia merely shook her head.

Johnny went over to his mother on Christmas day after church, and was received by her and by his sister with great honour. And she gave him many injunctions as to his behaviour at the earl's table, even descending to small details about his boots and linen. But Johnny had already begun to feel at the Manor that, after all, people are not so very different in their ways of life as they are supposed to be. Lady Julia's manners were certainly not quite those of Mrs. Roper; but she made the tea very much in the way in which it was made at Burton Crescent, and Eames found that he could eat his egg, at any rate on the second morning, without any tremor in his hand, in spite of the coronet on the silver egg-cup. He did feel himself to be rather out of his place in the Manor pew on the Sunday, conceiving that all the congregation was looking at him; but he got over this on Christmas Day, and sat quite comfortably in his soft corner during the sermon, almost going to sleep. And when he walked with the earl after church to the gate over which the noble peer had climbed in his agony, and inspected the hedge through which he had thrown himself, he was quite at home with his little jokes, bantering his august companion as to the mode of his somersault. But be it always remembered that there are two modes in which a young man may be free

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and easy with his elder and superior,—the mode pleasant and the mode offensive. Had it been in Johnny's nature to try the latter, the earl's back would soon have been up at once, and the play would have been over. But it was not in Johnny's nature to do so, and therefore it was that the earl liked him.

At last came the hour of dinner on Tuesday, or at least the hour at which the squire had been asked to show himself at the Manor House. Eames, as by agreement with his patron, did not come down so as to show himself till after the interview. Lady Julia, who had been present at their discussions, had agreed to receive the squire; and then a servant was to ask him to step into the earl's own room. It was pretty to see the way in which the three conspired together, planning and plotting with an eagerness that was beautifully green and fresh.

"He can be as cross as an old stick when he likes it," said the earl, speaking of the squire; "and we must take care not to rub him the wrong way."

"I shan't know what to say to him when I come down," said Johnny.

"Just shake hands with him and don't say anything," said Lady Julia.

"I'll give him some port wine that ought to soften his heart," said the earl, "and then we'll see how he is in the evening."

Eames heard the wheels of the squire's little open carriage and trembled. The squire, unconscious of all schemes, soon found himself with Lady Julia, and within two minutes of his entrance was walked off to the earl's private room. "Certainly," he said, "certainly;" and followed the man-servant. The earl, as he entered, was standing in the middle of the room, and his round rosy face was a picture of good-humour.

"I'm very glad you've come, Dale," said he. "I've something I want to say to you."

Mr. Dale, who neither in heart nor in manner was so light a man as the earl, took the proffered hand of his host, and bowed his head slightly, signifying that he was willing to listen to anything.

"I think I told you," continued the earl, "that young John Eames is down here; but he goes back to-morrow, as they can't spare him at his office. He's a very good fellow,—as far as I am able to judge, an uncommonly good young man. I've taken a great fancy to him myself."

In answer to this Mr. Dale did not say much. He sat down, and in some general terms expressed his good-will towards all the Eames family.

"As you know, Dale, I'm a very bad hand at talking, and therefore I won't beat about the bush in what I've got to say at present. Of course we've all heard of that scoundrel Crosbie, and the way he has treated your niece Lilian."

"He is a scoundrel,—an unmixed scoundrel. But the less we say about that the better. It is ill mentioning a girl's name in such a matter as that."

"But, my dear Dale, I must mention it at the present moment. Dear young child, I would do anything to comfort her! And I hope that some-

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thing may be done to comfort her. Do you know that that young man was in love with her long before Crosbie ever saw her?"

"What;—John Eames!"

"Yes, John Eames. And I wish heartily for his sake that he had won her regard before she had met that rascal whom you had to stay down at your house."

"A man cannot help these things, De Guest," said the squire.

"No, no, no! There are such men about the world, and it is impossible to know them at a glance. He was my nephew's friend, and I am not going to say that my nephew was in fault. But I wish,—I only say that I wish,—she had first known what are this young man's feelings towards her."

"But she might not have thought of him as you do."

"He is an uncommonly good-looking young fellow; straight made, broad in the chest, with a good, honest eye, and a young man's proper courage. He has never been taught to give himself airs like a dancing monkey; but I think he's all the better for that."

"But it's too late, now, De Guest."

"No, no; that's just where it is. It mustn't be too late! That child is not to lose her whole life because a villain has played her false. Of course she'll suffer. Just at present it wouldn't do, I suppose, to talk to her about a new sweetheart. But, Dale, the time will come; the time will come;—the time always does come."

"It has never come to you and me," said the squire, with the slightest possible smile on his dry cheeks. The story of their lives had been so far the same; each had loved, and each had been disappointed, and then each had remained single through life.

"Yes, it has," said the earl, with no slight touch of feeling and even of romance in what he said. "We have retricked our beams in our own ways, and our lives have not been desolate. But for her,—you and her mother will look forward to see her married some day."

"I have not thought about it."

"But I want you to think about it. I want to interest you in this fellow's favour; and in doing so, I mean to be very open with you. I suppose you'll give her something?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," said the squire, almost offended at an inquiry of such a nature.

"Well, then, whether you do or not, I'll give him something," said the earl. "I shouldn't have ventured to meddle in the matter had I not intended to put myself in such a position with reference to him as would justify me in asking the question." And the peer as he spoke drew himself up to his full height. "If such a match can be made, it shall not be a bad marriage for your niece in a pecuniary point of view. I shall have pleasure in giving to him; but I shall have more pleasure if she can share what I give."

"She ought to be very much obliged to you," said the squire.

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"I think she would be if she knew young Eames. I hope the day may come when she will be so. I hope that you and I may see them happy together, and that you too may thank me for having assisted in making them so. Shall we go in to Lady Julia now?" The earl had felt that he had not quite succeeded; that his offer had been accepted somewhat coldly, and had not much hope that further good could be done on that day, even with the help of his best port-wine.

"Half a moment," said the squire. "There are matters as to which I never find myself able to speak quickly, and this certainly seems to be one of them. If you will allow me I will think over what you have said and then see you again."

"Certainly, certainly."

"But for your own part in the matter, for your great generosity and kind heart, I beg to offer you my warmest thanks." Then the squire bowed low, and preceded the earl out of the room.

Lord De Guest still felt that he had not succeeded. We may probably say, looking at the squire's character and peculiarities, that no marked success was probable at the first opening-out of such a subject. He had said of himself that he was never able to speak quickly in matters of moment; but he would more correctly have described his own character had he declared that he could not think of them quickly. As it was, the earl was disappointed; but had he been able to read the squire's mind, his disappointment would have been less strong. Mr. Dale knew well enough that he was being treated well, and that the effort being made was intended with kindness to those belonging to him; but it was not in his nature to be demonstrative and quick at expressions of gratitude. So he entered the drawing-room with a cold, placid face, leading Eames, and Lady Julia also, to suppose that no good had been done.

"How do you do, sir?" said Johnny, walking up to him in a wild sort of manner,—going through a premeditated lesson, but doing it without any presence of mind.

"How do you do, Eames?" said the squire, speaking with a very cold voice. And then there was nothing further said till the dinner was announced.

"Dale, I know you drink port," said the earl when Lady Julia left them. "If you say you don't like that, I shall say you know nothing about it."

"Ah! that's the '20," said the squire, tasting it.

"I should rather think it is," said the earl. "I was lucky enough to get it early, and it hasn't been moved for thirty years. I like to give it to a man who knows it, as you do, at the first glance. Now there's my friend Johnny there; it's thrown away upon him."

"No, my lord, it is not. I think it's uncommonly nice."

"Uncommonly nice! So is champagne, or ginger-beer, or lollipops,—for those who like them. Do you mean to tell me you can taste wine with half a pickled orange in your mouth?"

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"It'll come to him soon enough," said the squire.

"Twenty port won't come to him when he is as old as we are," said the earl, forgetting that by that time sixty port will be as wonderful to the then living seniors of the age as was his own pet vintage to him.

The good wine did in some sort soften the squire; but, as a matter of course, nothing further was said as to the new matrimonial scheme. The earl did observe, however, that Mr. Dale was civil, and even kind, to his own young friend, asking a question here and there as to his life in London, and saying something about the work at the Income-tax Office.

"It is hard work," said Eames. "If you're under the line, they make a great row about it, send for you, and look at you as though you'd been robbing the bank; but they think nothing of keeping you till five."

"But how long do you have for lunch and reading the papers?" said the earl.

"Not ten minutes. We take a paper among twenty of us for half the day. That's exactly nine minutes to each; and as for lunch, we only have a biscuit dipped in ink."

"Dipped in ink!" said the squire.

"It comes to that, for you have to be writing while you munch it."

"I hear all about you," said the earl; "Sir Raffle Buffle is an old crony of mine."

"I don't suppose he ever heard my name as yet," said Johnny. "But do you really know him well, Lord De Guest?"

"Haven't seen him these thirty years; but I did know him."

"We call him old Huffle Scuffle."

"Huffle Scuffle! Ha, ha, ha! He always was Huffle Scuffle; a noisy, pretentious, empty-headed fellow. But I oughtn't to say so before you, young man. Come, we'll go into the drawing-room."

"And what did he say?" asked Lady Julia, as soon as the squire was gone. There was no attempt at concealment, and the question was asked in Johnny's presence.

"Well, he did not say much. And coming from him, that ought to be taken as a good sign. He is to think of it, and let me see him again. You hold your head up, Johnny, and remember that you shan't want a friend on your side. Faint heart never won fair lady."

At seven o'clock on the following morning Eames started on his return journey, and was at his desk at twelve o'clock,—as per agreement with his taskmaster at the Income-tax Office.

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Commonplaces on England.

The periodical writers, especially the writers in newspapers, who assume to themselves the right of speaking in the name of the nation at large, are in the habit of constantly using the word "we," not only in the common sense of "I who write this," but in the special and peculiar sense of "We, the English people." The broad, general principle with which a leading article generally sets out to run its race is constantly thrown into the form of some assertion of this sort. "We are not a speculative people," "We are a patient people," "We can make anything in the world except a handsome public building," &c. A complete collection of the sentiments of this kind uttered in any given year in any one popular paper, would supply a highly curious portrait of the nation—not as others see it, but as it is seen by writers who embody in their own persons a full dose of the national characteristics, and who intensify by describing them. Some curious and important consequences follow from the habit of propagating in all directions notions on such an important subject as the national character adapted to the exigencies of periodical literature, the first and most pressing of which is to produce impressions as vivid as they are transient.

The first observation which arises on it is, that the view of the English character which it produces is tinged throughout by humourous self-depreciation. Of the commonplaces which abound in newspapers about English national character few are directly and in terms boastful, or even complimentary. The commonest expressions on the subject are meant to justify measures or institutions by a half-contemptuous admission of the absence from the English character of some lofty attribute which would have remedied the defects complained of; but this is always attended with an insinuation, more or less express, that the attribute in question is not really lofty or magnificent, though it is not worth our while to dispute its claims. Suppose, for instance—and it is a very common case—that the object in view is to pooh-pooh and set on one side some clergyman who has pushed his speculations beyond what are usually viewed as the limits of orthodoxy. The commonest, and one of the most effective, ways of doing so is to say in substance—"This may be all very well, but we are not a speculative nation; carry your doubts and inquiries elsewhere." This is in terms an admission that the English people has renounced the highest of its intellectual functions, and that it is fit only for those lower exertions of intelligence by which men provide for their daily wants. The writer really does intend to hint something of the kind, though he probably does not precisely know himself how far he is prepared to go; but he means a good deal more

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besides. He means to insinuate that the speculations on which the clerical heretic is disposed to set so high a price are, in truth, all nonsense, and that the British public, with its contemptuous admission of ignorance, is wiser than its self-satisfied instructor, with his presumptuous claims to superior knowledge. For once in a way, such an expression may pass muster well enough. The proper answer to a person otherwise not worth answering may frequently be—"No doubt you are much wiser than I, but this is my opinion, and I shall act on it." In time, however, such admissions, made merely for controversial purposes, become established as recognized commonplaces. For some temporary purpose people are told that they are this, that, and the other, but at last they come to think that the fact is really so. An opinion grows up that the English nation is not fitted for speculation—that it has little logical power—that it cares little for "theory," meaning thereby principle in any form; and these opinions, put forward with humourous levity, and persisted in more from a good-natured contempt of those against whom they are levelled than for any other purpose, have often most serious practical consequences. For instance, it was for many years a fashion to say that we are not a military people; that the English nation are utterly indifferent to military glory, and that we had finally betaken ourselves to the acquisition of wealth as the only occupation worthy of a serious people. Some of our readers may happen to remember a caricature of a well-known picture which appeared in *Punch*, and which embodied this sentiment in a very pointed manner. The title of the caricature was "The Choice of Hercules." John Bull, as Hercules, was between Mr. Cobden and the Duke of Wellington. He willingly followed the prophet of free-trade, who was pushing him along towards peace and plenty, and looking back with a good-humoured grin at the hero, who, with a stern countenance, was pointing upwards. It has now become almost trivial to say how completely false this impression was, and how important were the consequences of the mistake. It is far from improbable that many lives and much money might have been saved if we had been a little less ready to admit that we had ceased to care for anything beyond present ease and comfort, and if we had insisted a little more on our retention of the properties which have made England a great nation. It is always best to speak the exact truth about both men and nations, and it is unworthy to allow false conceptions of the character of the country to grow up for no better reason than that by doing so we parry for the moment some troublesome question, and save ourselves the pains of finding the true answer. Let us consider a few of these commonplaces, and their relation to the real state of the case.

One considerable group of these refers to the intellectual character of the country. Everywhere we meet with the assertion, "We are not a speculative people;" and this dogma is worked in such a way as to furnish an answer to almost every new opinion advanced upon any subject which the general body of the public are not at the moment

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inclined to discuss. Theological discussion, within certain limits, is the very breath of the nostrils of a considerable proportion of the public. The standing duels between different sects of Christians, and different shades of opinion—between the Roman Catholic and the Protestant, between the High and the Low Churchman, between the Church of England and Dissenters—are never interfered with; they go on perpetually in their own spheres, and according to their own rules, without exciting the faintest censure, generally speaking without even attracting attention. If, however, certain limits, ill-defined, though generally tacitly understood, are transgressed; if the principles usually taken for granted on both sides are brought into serious question—especially if this is done in such a manner as to attract any considerable amount of public attention and interest—all the more influential organs of public opinion give utterance, from time to time, to a prolonged and scandalized hush. The disputants are told that they are stretching their tether too far. "We are not a speculative people." We—the English people—are not going to hear real discussions upon these subjects. Our principles are fixed, our minds made up, and let no man who wishes for anything that others can give him presume to try to unsettle them. In politics the hush is neither so loud nor so long, for the custom of the country permits a much greater amount of real liberty of thought and discussion upon these than upon most other subjects. Here, however, as in the theological department, there is a limit. Let people try to test almost any institution by anything that wears the appearance of an abstract principle, and they will be confronted with the same doctrine in a slightly different shape. Probably they may not be told that "we are not a speculative people," but they will most assuredly learn, if they did not know it before, that we are a practical people; that the English nation is not to be deluded by theory; that compromise is the very soul of all our institutions, and that unless a man is prepared to suggest some compromise which the two contending parties are likely to accept, he had better hold his peace altogether. Some years ago a discussion arose about Sunday trains or Sunday shopping. A very popular and influential writer, having occasion to handle the subject, observed in the usual oracular way, "The English Sunday is a compromise," and he went on to point out that it shared that characteristic with the British constitution and many other standing subjects of veneration. Wherever any arrangement whatever has to be regulated on anything approaching to a principle, observations of the same sort are always put forward. Sometimes we are told that we are not a logical people; on other occasions we discover that there is no reason why we should be consistent. In one way or other we are continually boasting, with a strong spice of the pride that apes humility, of a strange disproportion which is supposed to exist between the strength of our reason and that of our prejudices. Is it in fact true that such a disproportion exists? Does the English nation as a rule disregard the truth? Is it incapable of being convinced by an impartial inquiry into truth that its preconceived

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opinions are not true in fact, and that its institutions or articles of belief ought to be altered? If these things are not so, it would surely be worth while to give up the habit of asserting that they are, and of thus misleading those who have to act with reference to their conceptions of English character into errors which may have very serious practical results.

A person disposed to inquire seriously whether or not the English are a speculative people would, in the first place, try to ascertain what he meant by the word, and by other words of the same sort. Upon inquiry he would find it impossible to assign to them any other meaning than that of thoughtful, fond of inquiry, and the like. A man speculates who is in the habit of comparing the world outside of him with the principles on which he usually acts, and who judges of the truth of his principles by considering how far they agree with the facts to which they are applied. He is in short a man who loves the truth, who wishes to find out what it is, and who, when he has found it out, acts upon his discovery. Does the English character answer to this description? The whole history of the nation answers, Yes, in the most emphatic manner. Perhaps there is not in all the rest of the world any people which has on all occasions adhered so vigorously to that of the truth of which it has once been convinced, or has allowed its policy to be influenced so deeply and permanently by abstract reasoning. It might have been expected that this would be so, for no nation has in all stages of its history been so rich in men eminent for original thought and abstract inquiry. No doubt it is quite true that English people have always been singularly slow in accepting proof of theories, and that when they have accepted them as true they have applied them to the infinitely complicated masses of fact with which governments and legislatures have to deal with singular deliberation, and an unparalleled quantity of discussion. This, however, shows neither distrust of the processes of reason, nor scepticism as to the possibility of discovering truth. It shows nothing more than consciousness of the true nature of the undertaking in which every one must of necessity be engaged who wishes to investigate the truth and apply it to any useful purpose. To view truth as something complex and hard to be learnt, to distrust first impressions, to work towards it gradually, and to apply with caution the results ultimately obtained, is the part of sincere believers in truth, not of those who doubt the possibility of reaching it. The history of England shows decisively which path it has followed as a whole. Twice in the last three centuries, at the time of the Reformation, and at the time of the French Revolution, great dams opposed to the general current of human thoughts and passions have given way after a long and silent collection of the waters behind them. On each occasion the English nation behaved in precisely the same way. They considered the matter in hand with a ponderous, dignified calmness, which opposed to the various conflicting impulses a sufficient *vis inertiæ* to allow each to act with its full force. Neither the Calvinists nor the Catholics, neither the democrats nor the legitimists, ever had their way in this country; but why not? Because

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the public thought that a compromise, something between the two, was the safest course? Certainly not. Because they were convinced that neither party had solved the whole problem; that neither was entirely in the right; that the truth was something far deeper and wider than either of the contending parties supposed it to be, and that it has to be discovered, not by taking up with showy maxims which claim to be true because they were coherent, but by laborious methods of detail, by making things rather better which were clearly bad, and by continually seeking and searching into them to see why they were bad, and what were the principles on which they ought to be based.

Any one who will attentively consider the history of England, and especially that part of it which is passing before his own eyes, will perceive that the alleged dislike of Englishmen to theory and speculation is, in reality, a dislike for falsehood and rashness. Once give proof of the falsehood of any proposition, on which an English belief or institution is founded, and the days of that belief or institution are numbered. People go on denouncing, despising, and attacking it with the callous tenacity which belongs to so many English proceedings. For a long time the wall stands fair and square before the battering-ram, but the blows continue to fall till, after an incalculable quantity of talk and trouble, the obstacle is at last removed, and truth is victorious. What looks like compromise and indecision is, in reality, only an effort of the obstinacy and stubbornness of the controversialists. Each fights for every rag of his opinion till the side on which truth lies has gained a victory so decisive as to make any future fighting impossible. When the very last grain of wheat has, by unspeakable efforts, been sifted out of the chaff, the matter is at an end, and not before. Even when the victory is finally won and the principle established, a sort of shelter is provided—partly by generosity, partly in order to save trouble for the beaten party. Enough of their theory is left them to swear by. Their opponents are usually disinclined, if their own principles are established in fact, to take much trouble about humiliating the other side, by stickling for a categorical legal recognition of their own triumph.

An excellent illustration of this mode of proceeding is afforded by the whole history of the establishment in this country of the principle that men are free to hold any religious opinions they please. To say exactly how the law of the land stands on this point would require a great deal of half-antiquarian, half-legal knowledge. For instance, the law as to religious liberty is something of this kind. The Church of England has jurisdiction over all Englishmen, and, amongst other things, compels them to hold the Christian faith according to its own principles, and it may punish, as heretics, all those who deny it, or any part of it, to be true. It may not, however, declare anything whatever to be heresy except what is laid down as such in the Thirty-nine Articles, &c., until the Queen, with the consent of Parliament, shall have declared what is to be so considered, which her Majesty and her predecessors have taken exceed-

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ingly good care not to do. Neither can the Church punish as heretics, by the help of the lay power, anybody who does deny the doctrines in the Thirty-nine Articles; nor can it punish any one by spiritual censures in such a way as to hurt him, unless he is a beneficed clergyman; and though there are all sorts of temporal penalties denounced against people who do not believe or worship aright, yet they are all prevented from acting by one contrivance or another. In other words, any one but a beneficed clergyman is free to think what he pleases about religion and to worship as he likes.

It is easy to call a system like this, composed of elaborate rules, blockaded by exceptions co-extensive with themselves, a compromise. It is, in fact, no compromise at all; but the monument of the triumph of a great principle, established, step by step, in the face of fierce and even desperate opposition, but established so firmly that, after being once established, it never required further discussion or inquiry, but became a sort of axiom in politics. "*Vestigia nulla retrorsum*," is the motto of all English reforms. When the battle is once won, it is won once for all. Of course, while the process of struggle and inquiry is still going on, compromises may and do exist, but they are mere truces, temporary expedients which are never conclusive. An English controversy never really ends until one side has finally knocked the other down, and stamped on it, with more or less emphasis, according to the way in which the question has been discussed.

It is not difficult to compare the probabilities of this theory with commonplaces couched in language which can have no other real meaning than that the English people are constitutionally indifferent to truth, that they are incapable of understanding what a true theory is, and that they look out only for convenient compromises between conflicting theories. When steadily looked at, this theory may be seen to be not merely untrue, but unmeaning. It proceeds, in the first place, upon an indistinct and really unintelligible notion that theories have some existence of their own in the air apart from the minds which entertain them, and that the conflict of theories means something different from controversies between the men who hold those theories. It is absurd to suppose that there is a great difference between the people who are supposed to adopt the compromises and those who hold the theories between which the compromises are supposed to be made. The fact is that the compromises are made by the people who hold the opposite theories; but they make them as an instrument of war, not as a surrender of their own views. The compromise represents no one's opinions, nor does its existence show that those who made it had none, or did not believe them. In fact, it proves the reverse. The real inference from the complicated character of English institutions, and the peculiar and apparently tortuous character of English policy, is not that Englishmen are deficient in logical power or in belief in their own theories, but that a great variety of opinion exists against them, and that the opinions of very different kinds of people have had each in their turn

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a considerable effect on the actual course of events. The notion that Englishmen are not speculative, because the practical results of their speculations are not simple, is just like the notion that the propulsive force of gunpowder and the force of gravitation have no assignable direction, because it is a very difficult thing to trace accurately the course of a projectile.

Apart from this general view of the matter, it is surely impossible to reconcile the theory which denies speculative power to the English nation with the fact that in all practical questions our countrymen are proverbially decisive and consistent. No one has ever carried depreciation of the intellect of this country so far as to say that English people are distinguished in the management of business by not knowing their own minds, and by being unable to carry out consistently any course of conduct on which they have decided. Yet this ought to be the case, if we were not a speculative people. No human undertaking whatever, from mending a pen or making a pair of shoes, up to founding an empire, can be conducted without some theory, without some thought on the subject. No one can act at all unless he has some object in view, and some notion of the nature of the means by which it is to be effected; and the only real difference between the speculation which leads to immediate and that which leads to distant results, is a difference in degree. Great and well-deserved admiration has of late years been bestowed upon the wonderful engineering feats, of which the last two generations have witnessed so many. Most of them rested on speculations and theories of the most recondite and elaborate kind. Locomotive engines and their applications to railroads were theories long before they were translated into facts. So were the Atlantic steamers and the tubular bridges of which we have all heard so much. Can it be true that a nation which has taken the lead in such works as these should really be deficient in power of thought—in other words, in speculation?

The disposition to run down or to deny altogether the intellectual power of Englishmen is only one of the many forms assumed by the awkward irony under consideration. A very common form of it is the absurd habit of putting forward on every occasion the lowest motives only as those on which our policy is based. Throughout a great part of continental Europe there is a fixed belief that the policy, and especially the foreign policy, of this country is sordid, selfish, and cunning, in the highest possible degree. Every step that we ever take is supposed by the French to be some diabolical device for extending our commerce, and by the Americans to be some hateful plot on the part of the aristocracy against their greatness and glory. The Macchiavellian theory of John Bull is, perhaps, not quite so popular now as it was some years ago, but he is still looked upon as a terribly hard-hearted old miscreant, whose principal aim in life is to force his hardware down people's throats, and to clothe them by main strength in his cotton fabrics. To a considerable section of the European world we are still known as the

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race perfidious beyond all others, and successful principally by reason of our perfidy. In M. Hugo's great repertory of fine phrases, England figures as "le mauvais riche;" and the standing topic of continental—especially of Roman Catholic—critics upon us is, that with all our wealth and power, we are a hard-hearted, selfish, wicked set, whose glory is the luxury of the few, based on the wretchedness of the many. It is one of the most curious of common things that this estimate of the character of England should prevail throughout a great part of the world, and that the nation so stigmatized by its fellows should rather enjoy the process than not. The most indignant eloquence, the most solemnly pronounced censure from any foreign country, is copied into English newspapers, and produces nothing but a smile half amused and perhaps a quarter contemptuous. We do not care enough about the opinion of others to take the trouble to despise it thoroughly and heartily, or to ask ourselves at all why we despise it. If a Frenchman reads attacks upon France, he gets furiously angry; he wants to defend himself; he feels as an Englishman would feel if he were made the object of public accusation in his own newspaper. He cares intensely for the public opinion of Europe, and has no sort of wish to conceal the fact. We treat all such things consistently, on the principle that such attacks amuse our critics, and cannot by any possibility hurt us. This sublime and imperturbable pride is very impressive, and in its way a very good thing. In these days, the power of public opinion in all its forms is so great, that much is to be said in favour of any one who appeals habitually to any other standard of right and wrong, and a nation utterly unmoved by the praise or blame of others, so long as it is satisfied with its own proceedings, sets an excellent example to the world. It may, however, be easily debased into something which cannot in any way be made the subject of praise. To be utterly unmoved by the reproaches of others, and perfectly indifferent to their approbation, is an excellent thing. To adopt their reproaches as if they were true, or to act in such a way as to allow them to suppose that their reproaches are true, is a very different thing; and there is a sort of fashion amongst us of speaking and writing in such a way as to countenance these conclusions. The French, for instance, profess in the loudest terms all manner of splendid sentiments. We listen with external composure, but with an internal conviction that it is all swagger and nonsense. They assert that we are a purely mercenary people, indifferent to anything but wealth. Without exactly saying yes, we consent to discuss matters upon that understanding, retaining our own tacit conviction that the French estimate of us is as absurd as their estimate of themselves, but that it is not worth our while to explain to them what they cannot be expected to understand. After indulging for a time in this strange habit, in which a half humourous contempt for the vanity of others produces the appearance of want of respect for ourselves, we are surprised to find that the rest of the world have been taking us at our own estimate, that they really believe us to be the selfish and vulgar mercenaries that we have allowed

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them to suppose us to consider ourselves to be, and that the proposition that England is perfidious and hypocritical has come to be an established part of the political creed of continental Europe.

In fact, few nations are less open to charges of this kind. Whatever excuse there may once have been for such a view of English policy, there has been hardly any truth in it for a great length of time. On the contrary, it is probable that no nation in Europe is, on the whole, so much moved by appeals to a sense of honour and duty. Views of this kind, right or wrong, enlightened or not, have decided all the most important political questions that have arisen for many years past. To take a broad instance which at this moment is passing before our eyes, let any one compare the weight which, in popular estimation, attaches to arguments on the American question drawn from anything which has any plausible grounds to be called a moral principle, with arguments professedly based upon interest. The one would command universal attention; no one would venture even to put forward the other. The two points by which the sympathies of the nation, as well as their conduct, are determined, are the bearing of the struggle upon the prospects of slavery and its bearing on liberty. Intimately as the whole matter is connected with the interests of every part of the community, especially with those of the very poor, the theoretical way of looking at the matter is universal, and may be said almost to exclude every other. What interests the nation at large is not the question of cotton or of tariffs, or of the degree of sympathy and alliance which we might expect from either party in case of its success, but the question of slavery, the question of democracy, the question of the right to secede. It is probably true that some sections of the public are animated by a jealousy of the greatness of the old Union, and that others feel satisfaction in the notion that what has occurred is a discredit to democratic institutions, but though these feelings may not be lofty or even justifiable, they are genuine feelings. They are not mere calculations. The men who are glad to see America fail (as they think) do really dislike and disapprove of the principles on which American institutions are based. They would not be equally pleased, for instance, to hear of intestine divisions in Russia, by which the power of that empire might be reduced and our own relative force increased in consequence. Whatever the faults of our institutions may be, there can be no doubt that they tend to stimulate, to the very utmost, the moral sensibility of those who live under them. Extreme publicity and perfect freedom of discussion, encouraged in practice even more fully than in theory, are by the necessity of the case moralizing agents, though they certainly favour somewhat crude and shallow views of morality. Human nature must be far worse than it has ever yet been known to be before men could explicitly avow, and systematically defend, immoral or even selfish principles of action. But those who argue on principles which they do not really hold, argue at a great disadvantage. No dexterity can permanently conceal the inconsistency between their premisses and their conclusions, and the exposure of this inconsistency

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gives their opponents a triumph which can neither be averted nor concealed. The influences under which they live put English statesmen under a stronger compulsion to be substantially honest in their policy towards other nations than the government of any other country; and it would be very unjust to deny that the sentiments of the people point consistently in the same direction. The opposite impression which prevails so widely is due almost entirely to the trick which we have fallen into of expressing contempt for what we imagine to be the bombast and hypocrisy of other nations by throwing over our own feelings a strange affectation of cynical frankness.

It would be easy to show how the same temper of mind produces similar criticisms on many other subjects. For instance, it is a most popular depreciatory commonplace to speak of the inability of English people to enjoy works of art. Scores of newspaper articles in the course of every year contrast the power which Englishmen show in the more serious pursuits of life with the complacency with which they endure all that is hideous in their capital and their other great cities. We can, it is said, make a constitution, but for upwards of twenty generations we have never made a public building or a fine street. Much might be said upon this subject if it were worth while. It might be shown, for instance, that that small minority of persons—small from the nature of the case in every nation whatever—who have great artistic power, has not, on the whole, been smaller or less influential in England than elsewhere, especially in the course of the last hundred years; and it might also be shown that the absence of that prodigal splendour which characterizes French public buildings (between which and our own we are always drawing comparisons) is the effect of most complicated causes, in which superior taste and capacity for art plays a very small part; but enough has been said to show the general nature of the criticisms referred to, and to prove their great injustice.

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Amateur Music.

The cultivation of music as a recreation is not now confined in England to one class. While striking its roots down lower in the social scale, its topmost branches have also widened and strengthened. The study is not alone more general, it is also better understood and more seriously undertaken. If we have not yet returned to those "good old times" when, under the Stuart and Tudor dynasties, every member of a family could take his part in a glee or madrigal, and read the same at sight, we have at least left behind us the gloomy days which followed, when our grandfathers despised the accomplishment as one unfit for men, and our grandmothers' musical science (in justification of this contempt) was limited to a country-dance on the spinet. A reaction set in some years ago; yet not so long since but that Lady Blessington could venture in one of her books to pronounce openly against a man's occupying himself with music: an opinion, we will undertake to say, no writer would have the hardihood to propound in the present day. Such a view, indeed, could only be taken by one who regarded music in no other light than as a glittering superficial accomplishment, adopted solely for the purpose of shining in society, and tending to effeminate the character. The quiet firesides of thousands in our middle classes, when, evening after evening, husbands, sons, or brothers, sit down, after the day's work is done, to conquer the difficulties of some instrument, to make the stiff fingers pliant, the unsteady voice sure, without a thought of ever shining beyond the limits of that narrow circle: this fact alone would sufficiently refute any objectors to the rapid development of a musical taste among us, were objectors now to be found. We take it for granted there are not. It is only to the abuse of such gifts as the amateur musician happens to possess that exception is taken by just thinkers. A woman neglects her children's education for the sake of practising four hours a day; or a man fancies himself a Mario, and is a nuisance to all his friends, by shouting during a whole evening every tenor song he can find a quarter of a note flat; but it is hard if the cause of music be made to suffer therefrom. It sounds paradoxical to say that the ambition of young musicians seldom soars high enough, while there is at the same time a tendency to overstep certain limits which bound the legitimate field of the amateur. For such, we think, can be proved to be the case; and we, therefore, submit the following remarks to the reader's attention.

But first we would say a word relative to music on the Continent, and its progress among the masses, as compared with ours, during the last twenty years. In France music was once esteemed a courtly accomplish-

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ment, without which no polished gentleman's education was held complete; and that this was often something more than mere manual dexterity, that the study extended to the difficult laws of composition, the many charming airs of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries —attributed to royal and noble authors—abundantly prove. It need hardly be said that the accomplishment, as such, was confined to one class; but even in that class it subsequently languished; and whereas it had never been so general in what may be called the upper-middle stratum of society as it was in England in the days of Elizabeth, so its revival in the present day has been longer deferred than with us. For anything except the very lightest order of music, there was until lately absolutely no taste among nine-tenths of the French nation; it was never a serious study, and in home circles ambition seldom soared beyond a waltz or a romance of Paul Henrion's. Within the last year or two, however, there have been indications of an awakened intelligence on the subject; foremost among which is the success which has attended the Popular Concerts of Classical Music, established in Paris, in imitation of our Monday Concerts. With a full and admirable orchestra, and first-rate solo performers, these concerts have attracted enthusiastic crowds. But it would be a mistake to deduce from this that the love of such music is universal, or that its cultivation in private life is greatly on the increase. There must always be a vast number of accomplished musicians in a great city like Paris, and to them the performance of this music is, in the first place, addressed. Fashion will subsequently cause crowds to follow, when, as in this case, the music is given with rare perfection of execution. In the provinces, however, we know of no instance where the introduction of classical music has been even attempted; while in such cities as Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester, Liverpool, &c., the encouragement given to music of the highest class is a well-established fact. To relish such requires study; and the working population of France has not yet learnt to regard music as anything more than an agreeable tickling of the ears by a succession of lively tunes. There are no musical "societies," and part-singing is far less general than it has become of late years in England. We believe that Government—which takes so important a share in the support of the theatres—might do much to foster a love and diffuse a knowledge of the science of music throughout France, by the establishment of schools and scholarships. The Conservatoire does, and has for years done, more than any other body of musicians in Europe towards the encouragement and right direction of the art; but the influence of one body over a whole nation is necessarily small. That influence, indeed, is directed to a certain class only, and beyond its confines is scarcely felt. The production of such operas as Glück's *Orpheus*, Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro*, &c., at one of the minor lyrical theatres of Paris, may, indeed, be fairly cited as evidence that good music can be appreciated by the lower orders; but again, the rare excellence of the performance—in the first instance, absolutely unparalleled—must be taken into account. The fact above referred to—

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of the Government support of all the theatres—enables even the "Théâtre Lyrique," with its low prices of admission, to secure the services of artists who are only known to us here through the medium of the exorbitant Italian Opera Houses. The artist is the first attraction in this case; the same music, otherwise sung, would not prove acceptable, we believe; and too much importance is not to be attached to the fact that artisans paying 1f. 50c. are drawn to hear the master-pieces of Glück and Mozart thus rendered. Madame Viardot, as "Orpheus" at Shoreditch or Hoxton, would, we are confident, attract all London eastwards. It is a step in the right direction that the public of Paris should be rendered familiar, by degrees, with some of the master-pieces of the musical art; but there is still, in private life, little cultivation of the art, in its higher branches, at least.

It is not an unmeaning sentimental platitude to call Italy "the land of song." It is so in reality: not because it has produced the very best singers the world has known, but because every peasant is endowed with musical feeling, more or less, and when nature has denied him an agreeable voice, he will still indicate, with a nasal twang, his keen perceptions of time, and tune, and accent. Every ragged boy that drives a mule, every washerwoman as she hangs out your shirts to dry, drones some *stornello*, or popular song; which the English traveller hearing, declares with irritation that "Italians are, after all, anything but a musical people." Yet the very frequency of the infliction proves the case. Every one sings: consequently a great number of harsh and discordant sounds will constantly meet the ear; for it is quite a mistake to imagine that Italian voices are very generally sweet. A quick ear and a necessity to sing are distinct from the possession of a melodious organ; and the latter is perhaps not much more common in Italy than in England, though we must admit that its *exceptional* voices are unrivalled by those of any other country. As we ascend the social scale we do not find that the art is much cultivated. The dead level of mediocrity is rarely even *attained;* though there are instances, no doubt, where a degree of excellence has been reached by amateur singers in Italy, unknown in other countries. This does not, however, affect the statement we advance, and which any musical traveller is in a position to prove, that music, as a science, is wholly uncultivated in Italy. To account for this, it is only necessary to remember the lethargy under which the energies of the nation have so long languished. We cannot wonder that when higher and more solid branches of education have been neglected, nothing is done to elevate and direct a taste which is all but universal; and which, in consequence, runs wild after music of a violently emotional character, as might be expected among so impulsive a nation.

In turning to Germany, we find the measure of musical proficiency far greater than among any other people; though we hope the day is not distant when we may rival them. One can scarcely pass a night in a German town without having evidence that music is a part

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of the daily routine of life, and one to which it has been thought worth while to bring study and perseverance. The solid fair-haired Frau whom we hear, between the intervals of cooking and household-washing, practising with assiduity a sonata of Mozart's or Beethoven's; the band of roystering students, singing with admirable precision their four-part songs, as they stroll, arm in arm, through the streets at night; the Society of Amateurs, which nearly every small town can boast, meeting weekly to perform the works of the great masters; in these, and many other ways, we discover, even on a superficial acquaintance, how strong a hold music has on the hearts of the people. Music, loved for its own sake; music, studied without any ulterior thought of display; music, as an end, not as a means, this is what the home-life of Germany presents to us, and what we hope to emulate in England.

But we have much yet to learn. And if some of the following remarks apply but to one class in our vast community, it must be remembered that here, more than in any other country, habits, tastes, and opinions are regulated by one class alone. It has been observed, that there is but a solitary instance of a book, after being rejected by the learned and refined, working its way up from the lower ranks, until it forced a place for itself in our standard literature. That book is the *Pilgrim's Progress*. In music, as in everything else, we are governed by the same laws. The opinions of the few are filtered in their downward course through society, but sooner or later they impregnate all classes. It becomes, therefore, of some importance to examine what the principles and practice of our upper ten thousand are, in this same matter of music.

The education seldom begins at the right end. Children are mostly taught upon a system which brings music near upon a level with dancing, as an exercise of dexterous agility, into which very little mental labour enters; and it has this drawback, that it seldom amuses the children as much. How to perform a certain number of pieces glibly is made to be the sole ambition of most young persons; which is not unlike teaching a child *The Whole Duty of Man* by heart, before he has learnt to spell. It seems difficult to believe that by such a course any but exceptional natures can learn to regard music as more than a mechanical employment, involving a certain quantity of hard manual labour, the wages of which are applause and social success. In the case of girls, where the study is thus prosecuted, it is not surprising that so little love exists for an occupation over which they have wasted so much time, that when they marry they feel they can do so no more, and entirely "give up music," as it is termed. It was an allurement which served its purpose, and is put away with waltzing and other attractions, now no longer needed. If the husband is, indeed, partial to the art, this may be staved off for a while, but at the end of ten years it hardly ever happens that the wife, who has been thus trained to regard "execution" as the first necessity of musical being, does not find her duties interfere with the amount of daily practice

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essential to keep her hand *in*. It can hardly be otherwise where music is thus considered, and where the pleasure derived from it is purchased so dearly.

Were attention directed, on the other hand, to teaching children to read notes as fluently as they do letters, the results would be infinitely more satisfactory. To be able to decipher music with facility, is an unfailing possession. When acquired, it demands no practice, of necessity, to keep it up; and it may be a source of incalculable pleasure at times when no instrument is at hand. If to this be added some knowledge of thorough bass, and the laws which govern composition, the delight to be derived from the works of the great masters is more than doubled, and a precision and certainty attained which lead the student naturally to play a right chord even when a wrong one is written down. The same amount of time ordinarily bestowed on the acquirement of a manual dexterity (which, like mahogany, requires daily rubbing to retain its high polish,) will render a boy or girl a good musician. They will never, probably, astonish by performances which provoke comparison between the amateur and the professional; but if they possess taste and feeling, their playing will please far more than a scrambling imitation of Thalberg. These attainments are not dazzling ones; but they will enable people to play whatever is set before them without hesitation, and they will greatly increase the real love of music. As they become more general, too, they will tend to drain away that deluge of water-works in all its forms, whether as river, sluice, or fountain, wherewith society has been for some time overwhelmed.

To singers the above remarks apply with equal force. There is too little of solid foundation, and too much of the guinea-a-lesson veneer. Not that we undervalue the teaching of a first-rate master; far from it. When the voice can really be trained by such, the gain is almost incalculable. But the half-dozen lessons which enable a young lady to style herself "a pupil of" So-and-So's, and by virtue of which she inflicts whole operas upon her friends, are, we are inclined to think, a doubtful advantage. That natural diffidence is too often destroyed which would otherwise lead its possessor to confine herself to more modest, unpretentious displays; where her defects, at all events, would not be so glaringly apparent. From having sung a few operatic airs as exercises, she is deluded into the idea that she is a prima donna, ready made—and the consequences are disastrous to society. This class of music, even when as well sung as it can be by an amateur, is generally offensive to good taste, when transplanted into a drawing-room, where it is impossible that the requisite dramatic expressions can be given. An air which is appropriate and effective in its proper place, becomes utterly meaningless and unprofitable when robbed of all that precedes and accompanies it. Of course there are exceptions, but we speak of this as the general rule. Not long since we heard a duet, preceded by four pages of recitative, of which the only recognizable words were "il bravo." We ask, what possible pleasure or benefit could accrue from such a performance? The singers

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were doing their own talents, no less than the music they attempted to render, great injustice. When we consider how very few professional singers give us unmixed pleasure by the performance of this music (even on the stage, still less in the concert-room), it is scarcely possible that an amateur should do so. There is a field open to him, however, where he is not likely to come into competition with professional musicians. There is, of all countries, a large collection of chamber-music, almost inefficient for concert purposes, and dependent greatly for its effect on the delicacy and tenderness with which it is rendered. From Haydn to Schubert, from Gretry to Gounod, from Pergolesi to Gordigiani, not to speak of older masters, and the beautiful fragments of all times and countries that have been handed down to us, there is a choice vocal library from which the professional singer very rarely takes down a volume. Yet, though unsuited to public declamation, such music is just the most appropriate and the most effective in a private room. The phrensied passion of a Norma, the ravings of a Lucia, the consumptive spasms of a Traviata are not here in their place. To say nothing of the voice, they demand a dramatic intensity of expression which very few even of those "to the manner bred" can get up on demand in a drawing-room, full of cold and quiet auditors. But a modest perception of the unfitness of certain music for the resources at their command, is unfortunately what most of our very best amateurs never acquire.

Part-singing and part-playing cannot be too much encouraged; both as necessitating precision, and also as tending to check an unwholesome craving for individual display. We see no reason why we should not become a musical people, in the highest sense of the word, if we work in the right direction. A more refined taste, and a more settled conviction of the value of positive knowledge, are already beginning to permeate the middle classes. It is a great gain that all the barriers of prejudice against music have been broken down; that boys are permitted to be taught the art; and that it is now generally held to be a rational and humanizing occupation for men of all conditions. That it is something more than this; that it elevates and enlarges the imagination, while it induces clearness and exactitude of thought, those who pursue the science in love, and patience, and humility, will learn, day by day.

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The Night before the Morrow.

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The Night before the Morrow.

Maiden, said I, and I looked
In the maiden's solemn eyes,
Seen a moment meeting mine,
Then o'erhid like destinies.
We were sitting in the twilight,
And the clouds were golden yet,
And it seemed so strange to speak
With the words of olden yet.
Maiden, said I, when to-morrow
Cometh with the risen sun,
Then the morrow shall have come
That so long hath been to be;
Even now so far it seemeth:
Maiden, said I, speak to me.

But the maiden, sitting meekly
In the fiery sunset falling
Over tower and over tree,
Over her and over me,
Said me never back a word,
Never spake and never stirred,
While the silence of the sea
Kept the silence of the shore;
And she lifted up her eyes,
Only once like destinies:
I had thought to clasp her fondly,
But I trembled and forbore.

Maiden, said I, tell me thou:
And the fervour and impassion
Of the love with which I loved
Gathered on me, pleading now,
Till the winds of Heaven moved,
And the waves came wailing, wailing,
Wailing from the sea.
Maiden, said I, tell me thou:
Tell me truly if thou fearest
That which long hath been to be,
When it cometh now so near us
That between thee and the morrow
All that hath to pass away
Is the darkness of a night
And the breaking of a day—
Tell me truly, like the angels:
Maiden, said I, speak to me.

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But the maiden still was silent,
Still was silent in the mellow
Light that lighted land and sea;
And she only for a moment
Raised her eyes again on me;
And she only for a moment
Flushed and faded suddenly.
And this all for all my pleading,
Done as if by one unheeding,
While the slow and listless waves
Died again upon the shore:
This was all the maiden did,
Till the night-wind even read
That my love was mine no more.

Maiden, said I, and I knelt:
And the twilight had grown deeper,
Till another light appearing,
Like a dream upon a sleeper,
Shone on land and shone on sea.
Maiden, said I, tell me, maiden,
Hearing me as if unhearing,
Seeing me as if unseeing,
While the tide-blood of my being
Beats to death because of thee:
Tell me, my beloved, tell me,
As the God above shall save thee,
If for all the love I gave thee
Thou hast ever loved me—
Tell me truly, like the angels;
Maiden, said I, speak to me.

Then the maiden bent and kissed me,
Kissed me once, and kissed me twice,
With the kisses of her mouth,
Warm like winds that woo the south,
There beside the sea.
And the world was all before us,
And the night-stars trembled o'er us,
And the night-waves brake in chorus,
Calling on the day to be.
Come to-morrow, said the maiden;
Yea, thou truly lovest me.

WILLIAM SMITH.

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Professional Etiquette.

Some years ago a gentleman, who lived in a somewhat lonely part of the country, was asked to go and see a poor neighbour who was very ill. On his arrival he found the man at the point of death, and extremely anxious to see a clergyman. The visitor went to the house of a clergyman who lived near, and told him of the dying man's wish. The clergyman replied that as the house of the dying man was out of his parish he could not interfere, nor would any remonstrances induce him to do so. An eminent lawyer was so fortunate as to be made the heir of a rich and childless old man, who, falling ill, showed him his will, by which it appeared that the testator had given a life-interest only to his intended heir. When this was pointed out to the sick man he said, "Yes, but I understood you to say you meant never to marry?" "I may have said so," was the answer, "but I certainly did not seriously mean it, and at any rate I should not wish you to act upon that assumption." "Then," said the sick man, "draw up the will so as to give yourself the absolute property, and I will execute it." The lawyer replied, that he could not make a will in his own favour, and before another lawyer could be found the testator had died, and the mistake had become irreparable. A gentleman was poisoned but escaped with his life; the poison remained in his body, and caused him grievous suffering. He employed certain unrecognized remedies, and by means of them, as he considered, recovered his health, and got the poison out of his system. He went to an eminent physician and described his case. The physician said, "I will treat you on the supposition that you really have got rid of the poison, but don't tell of me, for the remedy, which, as you say, has got it out, is not recognized by the profession."

These illustrations are instances taken from the three learned professions of a sort of secret code of laws, of which the outside world understands neither the principles nor the applications, but which exercise a wider influence than most people would suppose over the proceedings of some of the most important classes of the community. Such rules are almost always unpopular, and even if they are acknowledged to exist, are submitted to unwillingly by the public, though, like almost all peculiar jurisdictions, they often seem to be regarded with a strange sort of unreasonable loyalty by those who are subject to their provisions. In all probability each feeling springs from the same root. Professional men like professional rules, because they are usually founded on the principle that the profession to which they apply is something extremely dignified, and as such, entitled to exact from its members a corresponding

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demeanour, and from the public a corresponding degree of respect. The public view them with impatience, and at times even with disgust, because they are generally disposed to look upon them as organized hypocrisy, and because, at all events, they do not like to admit that any class has a right to claim any sort of permanent superiority over others. Each of these feelings acts, no doubt, as a useful check upon the other, and their relative force and utility depend upon the circumstances of the times and places in which they exist. In order to consider how they are related to each other in our own times it will be desirable to say a few words on the position which is at present occupied by professional men. Most of the liberal professions are closely connected with the Government. The Church, the Law in all its branches, and the Army and Navy may be considered as the great permanent link between the great bulk of the nation and the aristocracy. The nature of the connection is in each case obvious enough. An Established Church possessing endowments in every parish in the kingdom, and adorned with a certain number of such prizes as bishoprics and deaneries, offers to many thousands of families—who would otherwise have no sort of tie with the rich and great—a chance, remote it is true, but still appreciable, of becoming eminent, if not rich, and the certainty of occupying a position which ensures them the character and position of gentlemen, if their personal qualities enable them to assert and maintain it.

The profession of the law must always stand in the most intimate relation to the government of every country, whatever its form may be, for law and government are nearly convertible terms; and the mere fact that a man passes his life in putting in force, by the help of the law, the commands of the ruling power in the State naturally tends to give him a degree of sympathy with and interest in it, which would surprise those who have never seen it. The same is true even more strongly of the military and naval services, in which indeed the sentiment of a sort of special personal connection with the Government is carried almost to an unamiable extent.

The connection of other professions with the Government is less well marked and less important, though in a country like ours it pervades them all more or less. The medical profession is, in its essence, entirely independent of all the variable parts of human affairs. It discharges the same functions, under analogous conditions, in every part of the world, whatever may be the form of government of particular countries, or the circumstances of particular times; but, independent as it is in its substance, it has still a considerable connection with the Government. In most countries, and certainly in our own, the qualifications of medical men are ascertained by law, and bodies like the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, and Apothecaries' Hall, have a corporate existence and corresponding legal powers. Besides this, the Government, in its capacity of an employer of every kind of intellectual labour on a large scale, exercises considerable direct influence over this as well as other callings. There are, indeed,

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not more than one or two intellectual professions which are substantially unincorporated, and so completely unconnected with the political constitution of the country. Even in the case of art, there is the Royal Academy, with its own laws and customs. Literature can hardly be called a profession at all—so far as it is one, it is almost entirely lawless. Science, on the other hand, cannot, except in particular instances, be pursued as a regular occupation, unless those who pursue it are provided for by endowments, such as professorships, museums, or lectureships at scientific institutions. Professional etiquette may thus be described as a code of rules regulating to some extent the conduct, and deeply affecting the habits and feelings, of the members of all corporate professions. It also appears that, from the nature of the case, it always must be an essentially conservative institution, meant to maintain and carry out in practice whatever happens to be the established theory as to any particular profession, at any given time and place. How far, in our own time and country, is it a good thing? How far is the dislike with which it is regarded just?

The answer to these questions is obviously twofold. There are some merits and some defects inherent in professional rules as such. There are others which are appropriate to the rules which regulate the proceedings of every particular profession. The merit of professional rules, as such, almost always is that they are based upon a high-minded view of the nature of the profession to which they refer. For instance, the rule—a rule which has been recognized by and embodied in the law of the land—that the services of barristers and physicians are in substance gratuitous, and that the payment which they receive is voluntary on the part of the person to whom it is rendered, is no doubt based upon the general principle that the skill of both the lawyer and the physician ought to be regarded to some extent as an advantage, not to its possessor merely, but to all who stand in need of it, and that the rewards to be earned by those who acquire it are not to be measured exclusively by commercial principles. This rule, like many others, is an attempt, which may or may not be skilful, to give form to the sentiment that men have a common interest in the administration of justice and in the cure of disease, and that those who specially devote their attention to such subjects should, in doing so, be actuated not merely by the ordinary selfish motives of interest and ambition, but also by the nobler wish to promote the common good. The existence of such a sentiment, so long as it is put into a reasonable shape and kept within due bounds, is no doubt an excellent thing, but it is open to the great objection that it never is, nor can be, consistently acted on, and that, if it is professed without being acted on, it becomes the source of hypocrisy and falsehood.

It must, however, be observed that the existence of these things does not imply the total absence of that higher vein of sentiment upon the assumption of the existence of which the rules in question proceed. There is amongst the better kind of lawyers a sincere desire to do justice,

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or rather not to do injustice, and it is by no means an uncommon thing for them to be infinitely more peace-making than the inclination of their clients would lead them to be. That physicians have as a rule a most sincere and disinterested wish to do what they can to alleviate human suffering is within the experience of every family in the country. Hence professional etiquette may be regarded as a sort of black and white shield, on one side of which is written "principles," and on the other "hypocrisy." That the two do to some extent reproduce each other cannot be denied. It is in the nature of anything that approaches to a definite system of rules to do so. Professional rules are perhaps more open to this objection than most other systems, for they not only hold out the temptation to irregularity which is held out by rules of every description, but they hold it out to one particular class. The successful members of professions can afford to act upon high principles. A barrister or physician who counts his income by thousands has no occasion to fish for briefs or patients. It is often worth his while to tell disagreeable truths, and to refuse mean compliances, and it would be worth his while to do so even if he looked merely at the consequences as measured in fees; for though the immediate result might give offence to those by whom fees are dispensed, yet the general character for independence is to such a man matter of primary importance, and one which it would be worth his while to retain at the expense of a considerable money sacrifice. This, however, is true principally of successful men. It is on those who are just beginning to get on in their profession that the rules of professional etiquette weigh most heavily, and it is amongst them accordingly that they are most frequently disregarded, and that they cause the greatest amount of hypocrisy. To a man who, after years of suspense and difficulty, is just beginning to succeed, any one who has power to promote or hinder his success is a great man, and the immediate importance of pleasing him is such, that if professional rules stand in the way of doing so it requires great courage and good faith to act up to them. The most unpleasant and unamiable result of professional etiquette is the production of a class of men who enforce against others rules which they put themselves into a position to enforce by disregarding them during the earlier period of their career. Unpleasant as this may be, and wide as is the field which it opens to sarcasm, there can be little doubt that on the whole professional etiquette is a good, though it is often a highly invidious thing. Nearly all the most important affairs of life are in the hands of professional men, and the honour and dignity with which they are conducted depends to a great extent on the maintenance of a high sense of professional honour amongst those who conduct them, and to this sense of honour systems of etiquette contribute on the whole, though subject to the deductions just referred to.

To discuss the merits and defects which belong not to all professional rules as such, but in relation to the particular subjects to which they refer, it would be necessary to go through all the leading professions, and to possess a familiarity with their usages, and with the practical effects of

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them which hardly any one possesses. The limits of the present paper, to say nothing of any other reason, would render such a course impossible on the present occasion, but some observations may be made on the subject of the professional rules of lawyers—rules which are, perhaps, the most important and most characteristic of their class. The most important of these rules is that by which the profession is divided into two branches—attorneys and solicitors on the one hand, and barristers on the other. It is often asked, and with a great deal of reason, why the distinction should be kept up. In one of those singular controversies on what are sometimes described as "social" subjects which are sometimes admitted into the columns of *The Times*, a succession of anonymous voices crying in the wilderness, asked, on the one hand, "Why should not I, the client, see you, the barrister, face to face? Why, if I want a lease drawn, must I go to an attorney and pay him a long bill filled with aggravating items, when you who draw the deed get only one item out of the bill, and that not a large one?" Other anonymous persons, dating principally from the Temple and Lincoln's Inn, replied in woeful tones, "Why, in truth, should not you pay to us an angel's visit, and some three or four guineas, for which we would give you a lease which any law-stationer could engross, and which would be quite as good as the one for which the attorney (who, alas! does not come to us; such, at least, was the inference which the tone of the letters suggested) would charge you, say, twenty pounds?" Such laments arise from time to time without producing any particular result, and it is worth while to inquire why they do not, and why they should not.

The general theory of the distinction between the two branches of the legal profession would seem to be that the one is, and the other is not, a liberal profession; that the barrister is the superior and the attorney the inferior; that the one requires the manners, the accomplishments, and the education of a gentleman, and that these things are not to be expected of the other. Hence on all public occasions whatever the barrister is the conspicuous person. He sits in high places, and wears the professional uniform. The attorney comes to him, and he is fenced off from going to the attorney with a degree of care which seems to indicate that his virtue requires external fortification. Then, again, the attorney sends in his bill, and, if it is not paid, may bring an action for it; but the barrister has no claim whatever for his fees. According to the strictest view of the subject, he ought hardly to notice them; that is to say, he cannot in any way proportion the work to the money: a tariff is provided, specifying the prices below which he is not allowed to go, but beyond that he ought by rights to take what comes and make no bargains. This general view of his position is corroborated in detail by a number of little usages, all of which may be traced to the operation of the same sentiment.

If this general view of the profession be compared with the facts, a remarkable divergence between them displays itself. It is no doubt true that, if the duties of the two professions are compared, those of the

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barrister require the higher qualities—at least, in the higher class of men; but it is far from being true that the two professions differ on the whole as superior and inferior. The most distinguished members of the bar occupy, no doubt, a higher position than the most eminent attorney or solicitor; but the lower class of barristers would stand very low indeed amongst attorneys. It is childish to look on a man who passes his life in prosecuting and defending petty criminals at the Old Bailey and the quarter sessions, as in any respect the superior of one who has to manage the most important affairs of private families and public bodies. There are probably very few barristers who have to transact business as important as that which comes before the solicitors to a great railway company or any other great trading body. On what grounds, then, can the existing distinction between the two branches of the profession of the law be maintained, and what meaning has it?

In so far as it implies any personal superiority on the part of every barrister as such over every attorney as such, it is certainly idle and injurious, and ought not to be maintained at all. It ought, on the contrary, to be strenuously discouraged, for it operates in a singularly absurd and injurious way. It has undoubtedly produced a foolish notion that the profession of a barrister is much more fit for a gentleman than that of an attorney, and that the latter profession does not form one of the few callings between which a young man has to choose after completing that sort of education at a public school and university on which English parents (not unjustly) set so high a value. Novels afford excellent illustrations of the current fancies of the public on such topics as these. In a story lately published, Mrs. Gaskell makes the whole subsequent career of her hero turn on the fact that, instead of sending him from Eton to Oxford and thence to the bar, his father took him into partnership in his own firm, which had transacted the business of all the country gentlemen of a prosperous county time out of mind. The young man is mortified by finding that his old schoolfellows do not consider him as their equal, and ultimately (not exactly in his capacity of a solicitor, but on general grounds) knocks his partner on the head and buries him in a flower-garden, where he reposes till he is dug up in a railway cutting.

The prejudice which remotely contributed to this rash act undoubtedly exists, though, when looked at steadily, it is so absurd that it is hardly credible that it should exist. A man who picked up a scanty livelihood by holding briefs at circuit and sessions would, if his personal qualities entitled him to such treatment, be received as an equal by the squires whose pride so grievously mortified Mr. Wilkins; yet Mr. Wilkins's occupations required probably more mind, and certainly involved the possession of far greater power, and the receipt of a very much larger income. If the foolish notion which depreciates the importance and denies the dignity of such occupations were as universally despised as it ought to be, two great benefits would result to the very classes who keep up the prejudice. In the first place, the absurdly small

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list of professions recognized as liberal would be increased, and, though it would be increased by one only, this would be an increase in the proportion of 20 or 25 per cent. A young man leaving college may become a clergyman, a barrister, a doctor, or a soldier, or he may try to get an Indian appointment. For various reasons the number of such youths who become clergymen is rapidly decreasing, and is not likely to increase. To be a doctor requires special tastes, and though the profession of a soldier is an excellent one to die in, it holds out little prospect of living with comfort, except to those who could live as well without it. The Indian service is for some strange reason not very popular; of course the number of those who can enter it is strictly limited. Hence year after year the long list of idlers at the bar increases and multiplies. What such men do with themselves it is not easy to say, unless they write to *The Times* to know whether they can marry on 300*l.* a year. If the profession of an attorney stood, as it ought, upon the same footing in regard of social consideration as that of a barrister, numbers of these men might be both usefully and profitably employed in it. With good connections, good manners, a good head for business, and money enough to buy a partnership, a man may be pretty sure of a good income, and of an occupation which will not only provide for his expenses, but give vigorous exercise to all his faculties. It is surely the height of folly to look with prejudice on such an occupation.

It is undoubtedly true that the public prosperity, in the best sense of the word, depends to a great extent on the degree in which the institutions of a country are calculated to produce and to reward the moral and intellectual qualities which go to make up what we understand by a gentleman, and it is also true that there is no country in the world in which such qualities have been or are held in such esteem as in our own. In order to keep up this state of things, notwithstanding the changes which time produces in the state of society, it is absolutely indispensable that gentlemen should be always ready to show practically as well as theoretically that they are better fitted as such for any kind of business to which they may put their hands than those who have no claim to the title; in short, that they occupy the best places because they are the best men, instead of claiming to be the best men because they are put in the best places. It is a trite remark, that the stability of the House of Lords is owing to the fact that it is continually being recruited by the most distinguished members of all the principal classes in the community. The stability and permanence of aristocracy, in that wider sense of the word in which it applies to all persons who have the sentiments, the manners, and the education of gentlemen, depends on the extension of that education to as many classes as possible. If the time should ever come when as much courtesy and polish was expected of a crossing-sweeper as is now expected of a peer of the realm, the position of the peer of the realm would be better than it is now, for the grounds on which he ought to rest his claims to respect would be understood and admitted

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by all the world, and the respect, if he deserved it, would be paid without grudging or envy.

Every one, therefore, who wishes to see high and honourable feelings and educated minds invested with the importance which properly belongs to them, ought to discourage every prejudice which deters gentlemen from entering upon any kind of occupation, and to enlarge, as much as possible, the number of occupations conventionally regarded as liberal professions.

Apart, however, from the advantages which would accrue to the class of young men who have to choose their professions from having a larger number to choose from, there can be no doubt that great advantages would result to the public from the fact of the profession of an attorney being regarded as a liberal profession. The prejudice noticed above may be and is foolish, and as regards the better members of the profession scandalously unjust, but it cannot truly be described as unfounded. There are amongst attorneys and solicitors a large proportion of men as well educated, possessed of as high principles of honour, and as much entitled, in all respects, to every sort of social consideration, as any members of the community; but there are also a considerable number of persons of whom not one of these assertions is true. There are many attorneys to whom a man might with perfect satisfaction intrust his character and his fortune. There are also many whom, if he was wise, he would not trust with the opportunity of forging his name. It is obvious that the public estimation in which the profession as a whole is held will have a great effect on the relative numbers and influence of these classes. Men are always judged by the standard of their profession, and so long as attorneys are viewed with prejudice, the less respectable members of the profession will always be able to say, I am only an attorney, you do not expect me to act up to the standard of what in other walks of life would be considered honourable and high-minded.

If the public sentiment at large did consider the profession of an attorney as a liberal profession, in the full sense of the words, and if that sentiment produced its natural effects on those who were the objects of it, there can be little doubt that the result on the management of a vast mass of affairs would be in the highest degree beneficial. No one can tell, who has not seen and felt it, what an amount of irritation and heart-burning an attorney may cause, with the best intentions in the world, merely by faults of manner, and by being suspicious and over-cautious in the wrong place. For instance, a marriage settlement is to be drawn, the solicitor who draws it is an honest and sensible man, but has little delicacy either of feeling or expression. He is almost sure to look upon the matter as a sort of hostile suit, in which he is to assume every sort of dishonest intention on the other side, to think that every restriction which he can place upon the enjoyment by the one party of the property of the other is so much gained for his own side, and so to make a settlement which can never be anything else than a vexation and incumbrance to both parties, unless, indeed, they live together on such terms that it would have been

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better if they had never been married at all. This is just the sort of negotiation in which the tact and manners of a gentleman are at least as important as knowledge either of law or of business.

It appears from all this to follow that the sentiment on which the professional etiquette between the two branches of the legal profession is founded is wrong, but it does not follow from this that there is no other principle on which it can be justified. In the United States and in some of our own colonies the distinction between barristers and attorneys is unknown. A lawyer is a lawyer. He sits in his office and goes to his clients as he finds it convenient, and goes into court and there pleads the cause which he has prepared for trial whenever it seems advisable to do so. Does it follow from what has just been said that this is the right course to take, that the two branches of the profession ought to be fused into one, and that the professional etiquette which prevents a barrister from communicating with his client in the first instance, and from collecting the materials on which he afterwards has to address the court, is a mere prejudice. This is by no means a necessary consequence. It may well be that an attorney is entitled to as much social consideration as a barrister, and yet that the two professions are fundamentally distinct, and require both a different education and a different set of professional rules. The more the matter is considered the more it will appear that this is the case, and American experience does not really conflict with this; for so distinct are the two branches of the profession that, as a rule, one member of the firm takes the advocate's department, and the other or others that of the attorney.

Legal business may be divided into that which is and that which is not contentious. Certain kinds of Chancery suits, actions at law, and, in a word, all business which is conducted in a hostile manner between the parties, and which leads to what in the popular sense of the word are called trials, belong to the first class. Sales, negotiations, conveyancing in all its branches, the establishment of companies, and innumerable matters of the same kind, belong to the second. It is in contentious business, or in the steps preparatory to it, such as drawing pleadings, giving opinions, advising on evidence and the like, that barristers are engaged, and their prospect of eminence in their profession depends upon the degree in which they possess the requisite gifts for it. It is by fighting a long succession of battles in a number of different arenas, from the quarter sessions up to the House of Lords, that a man comes to be a judge or a vice-chancellor. The greatest attorneys have comparatively little to do with such scenes. There are many eminent attorneys who hardly ever deliver a brief or issue a writ. They are to barristers what diplomatists are to soldiers. There is the army in the background ready to fight the matter out if hard comes to hard, but the attorney shows his skill far more in keeping out of court than in coming into it. His business is to advise his client not so much on his legal rights as on the course of policy which as a man of sense he ought to follow, whereas the barrister

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looks to victory in the particular battle in which at the moment he is engaged. He may think his client foolish for having come into court at all, but that is his affair, and as he is there he has to see that he gets his rights, whether or not they are worth getting. Hence the two sets of men use the law for totally different purposes, and require a different kind of knowledge of it. All that an attorney wants for practical purposes is a broad general knowledge of the principles and rules which are most commonly applied in practice. With that amount of knowledge he will be able in ordinary cases to give sound advice. He will be able to tell a man broadly about a will or a purchase, or a contract, and to show him how he may carry out his intentions without exposing himself to any chance of disappointment. In short, he can guide him through the ordinary routine, and advise him as to the policy of transactions which take their natural course, and arrive at their expected conclusion.

The knowledge which the barrister requires, on the other hand, is a knowledge not so much of rules as of principles. It will not do for him to know generally—to put a very simple case—what is the regular way of making a particular kind of agreement, but he must also know, or at least must be able to find out, what will happen if it is made in an irregular manner, and what will be the particular consequences of different degrees of irregularity. He must not only know his way along the road, but he must in case of need be able to take an observation, and find out his position on the chart.

It is obvious that a different sort of education is required in order to get these different sorts of knowledge of the law. There is no reason for representing the two callings as superior and inferior, but they are radically distinct. A man might be an admirable attorney without the slightest pretensions to being a good lawyer in the barrister's sense of the words, and he might be a first-rate lawyer and an excellent advocate, without having any of the qualities which would fit him for an attorney. Where there is of necessity a difference in the kind of education required for different walks of life, there ought to be, and, under some form or other, there always will be, a distinction between the walks of life themselves.

These considerations answer the questions asked by the newspaper correspondents referred to above, as to the reason why the barrister should be approachable only through the attorney. The answer is, that as there is a substantial distinction between the duties of the two men, it is better to lay down a rule which prevents them from interfering with each other. Of course, if the original client would be his own attorney, and would himself do what the attorney does for him, he might dispense with the attorney, but as a general rule, if he went to a barrister instead of an attorney he would find that he didn't get what he wanted. To take the case which was discussed in the newspapers. Suppose a man goes himself to a barrister, and says, "Draw me a lease of such a house," the barrister might, no doubt, take his instructions and draw the lease;

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which when copied out by the law-stationer would look as neat and formal as if it had come through an attorney's office. It is, however, ten to one that the lease would be a mere snare and delusion. In order to make it worth having, it is necessary to have the title examined, searches made in various registers, original deeds compared with copies, and all manner of questions discussed in which the expediency of standing on a strict legal right is at least as important as the question of the existence of such a right. If the barrister is to do all this, besides drawing the lease and settling the phraseology of particular clauses, he must of course be paid for it, and then the client gains nothing except that he pays one man instead of another. If he does not do it, what is the lease worth?

This general difference between the duties and objects of the two professions is the root from which many other differences spring. Litigation is private warfare. It is the process by which, in an advanced and polished state of society, men redress their wrongs by the intervention of physical force. The ultimate result of a lawsuit, the gist and essence of the whole proceeding, without which it would not take place at all, is not the decision that the one party is right and the other wrong, but the fact that the one party seizes and carries off in a cart to the auction-room the other's household furniture, or sends his body to gaol. Private as well as public war has its rules, and its hardships are considerably mitigated by their observance. By distinguishing between the barrister and the attorney, the soldier and the diplomatist, considerable security is given to the public at large that the contest shall be fought out in a satisfactory manner. If the parties themselves conducted their own causes, courts of justice would constantly present spectacles like those which sometimes occur in the county courts, especially when the parties are females. A question having arisen touching a sale of eggs or crockery, one of the ladies became so furious that the judge (not very legally) ordered a policeman to put her in the corner, with her face to the wall, till the other side had said her say. If the attorneys who advised the proceedings, knew the parties from the first, and took all the evidence, were also to conduct the case in court, they would no doubt import far more personal feeling and much less temperate zeal into the matter than is the case at present—a conclusion which county-court experience confirms. The interposition of another link greatly cools matters down, and saves the public time, to say nothing of decency and propriety.

The position thus assigned to barristers gives birth to the whole of that system of professional rules by which it is determined what a barrister may and may not say and do in the management of a cause. They are numerous and somewhat too technical to admit of popular explanation, but they are, on the whole, a great safeguard to the public against needless harshness in the discharge of what cannot but be a harsh and unamiable process.

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Imitated from the Troubadour Sordel.

Her words, methinks, were cold and few;
  We parted coldly; yet
Quick-turning after that adieu,
  How kind a glance I met!
A look that was not meant for me,
  Yet sweeter for surprise,
As if her soul took leave to be
  One moment in her eyes;
Now tell me, tell me, gentle friends,
  Oh, which shall I believe,
Her eyes, her eyes that bid me hope,
  Her words that bid me grieve?

Her words, methinks, were few and cold:
  What matter! Now I trust,
Kind eyes, unto your tale half-told,
  Ye speak because ye must!
Too oft will heavy laws constrain
  The lips, compelled to bear
A message false; too often fain
  To speak but what they dare;
Full oft will words, will smiles betray,
  But tears are always true;
Looks ever mean the thing they say:
  Kind eyes, I trust to you!

Her looks were kind—oh, gentle eyes,
  Love trusts you! Still he sends
By you his questions, his replies,
  He knows you for his friends.
Oh, gentle, gentle eyes, by Love
  So trusted, and so true
To Love, ye could not if ye would
  Deceive, I trust to you!

DORA GREENWELL.

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Was Nero a Monster?

If, as is not improbable, the title of this essay should mislead readers into the notion that a playful paradox is about to be presented, they are begged to discard that suggestion at once, and to believe that my purpose is entirely serious. Indeed, one may consider it a proof of the imperfect condition of historical science that such a title should for a moment wear the aspect of a grim jest. At any rate, let me declare that nothing can be further removed from the spirit of this essay than the playful irony which would paint the mansuetude of one on whose name rests universal execration; or than the dialectical sophistry which would extenuate crimes until they almost wore the air of virtues. That Nero was an exemplary son, a loving husband, a sagacious statesman, or a reputable emperor, I altogether disbelieve; indeed one cannot resist the impression that he was a vain, dissolute, contemptible, and miserable man, not without good qualities, but with many vices, and placed in a situation where his vices must have been fearfully fostered. He *may* have been a monster little better than his fame. I do not know that he was; I do not even suspect that he was; but what I do know—with all the certainty possible in such a case—is, that in support of the capital charges against him, charges universally accepted without question, there is not for a rational inquisitive mind *any evidence whatever*.

This is a paradox which challenges the attention of all who interest themselves in History; a paradox in the true, and not the popular sense of the word, namely, in the sense of a statement which is at variance with the dominant opinion, though not in itself at variance with reason. There may be something, at first, to raise the reader's misgiving when he hears that a reputation so loaded with infamy as never yet to have found an apologist, rests upon charges which not only ought to have awakened scepticism by their very enormity and self-contradictions, but prove, on close inspection, to be utterly in defiance of all credit, and without even a semblance of warranty; yet the proof of such assertions is by no means difficult.

Many revolutions in our historical appreciations have already taken place. The application of Science, and above all of scientific scepticism, to History, has yet to be made; it will be fruitful in results. Niebuhr changed the whole aspect of Roman history by simply discriminating its mythological elements. But Niebuhr, keen-sighted among texts, and familiar with mythology, was as obtuse as his predecessors in all that related to psychology; and not being versed in science, was unable to detect fictions which any scientific sceptic would at once expose. I say

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scientific *sceptic*, because, as will presently appear, the mere possession of knowledge does not suffice to shake off that lethargy of credulity which oppresses the faculties of men whenever they pass beyond the laboratory into the wide spaces of History. They forget the lessons they have so laboriously learned, and so sedulously practised; they unhesitatingly accept as evidence respecting a character or an event, statements which, if offered respecting a phenomenon or a cause, would be subjected to a rigid scrutiny and vigilant verification.

There is nothing on which the generality of mankind, even the cultivated, need instruction more than on what constitutes Evidence. In Science we are forced to be vigilant. In Jurisprudence the keen interests of contending intellects fix attention upon every fact or semblance of a fact. But in most other departments our supineness is wonderful; and historians have been especially remarkable for throwing all their ingenuity into the construction of inferences and the accumulation of probabilities, instead of first carefully ascertaining whether the "facts" themselves were not worthless. Positive statements exercise a sort of fascination over the mind, coercing its assent; and what is once positively asserted often takes place unchallenged as historical fact. I have been made sensible of this lately by having, for a special purpose, to read the Roman historians. The picture they have painted of the empire is so remarkable an example of the unreflecting credulity with which History is mostly written, that I have resolved to take the character of Nero as an illustration of what would result if men began seriously to investigate the evidence on which the mass of traditional opinions is founded.

The evidence, and that alone, will claim attention here; nothing will be attempted in the way of extenuation, or apology. The admirers of Lord Bacon explain his conduct towards Essex, and his corruption on the bench, by adducing extenuating circumstances which may, or may not, mitigate the verdict passed upon the acts; but no advocate denies the facts, however he may interpret them. Not thus will the character of Nero be discussed. It is on the acts themselves, and not on their interpretation, that scepticism will rest. It is the crimes themselves which will be shown as unworthy of a place among historical facts. Whether Nero were on a level with the moral standard of his age, or miserably below that standard, is beside my present purpose; I simply mean to show that there is no evidence for the crimes of which he is accused.

In order to keep this essay within the requisite limits, only the four chief crimes imputed to him will be noticed. If it can be shown that the murder of Britannicus, the murder of his mother, the burning of Rome, and the murder of his wife, the chief acts on which rests the infamy of his name, are in all respects unworthy of credence, the evidence being sometimes even childish in its absurdity, there will be no need to investigate the minor charges. To show this, I shall require no captious subtlety; nor will it be necessary to demand from history the rigorous verification demanded in science. It will be enough to invoke the common sense of

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an ordinary jury. I shall let the witnesses tell their own story, and shall merely request the jury to appreciate its probability.

Let us first call the witnesses. They are three writers who lived long after the recorded events occurred, and who drew their contradictory records from the gossip of Rome. For most public acts it is probable that they had authentic documents; but for the private acts of individuals, and the *motives* which actuated these individuals, there were no documents whatever; at any rate, none which can be authenticated. It is specially noticeable that no contemporary actor in these scenes comes forward with his direct testimony; nor, indeed, is any one invoked by name as a witness. It is also noticeable that long after the imputed crimes had been committed Nero was eminently popular both with people and senate. Three years after the imputed matricide, the stern and virtuous Thraseas could speak with praise of Nero and his government. Fear may have suppressed contemporary accusations. But when the tyrant was dead why did not the accusers come forward? And why did not Seneca and Burrhus, when condemned to death, avenge themselves on Nero by revealing what they are supposed to have known so well? It is certain that stories circulated at Rome respecting Nero, both in his lifetime and for years afterwards; but before we believe such stories we must demand that at least some authenticity better than that of gossip be shown to belong to them; we must ask who vouches for their truth, and what were his means of knowing it.

Suetonius, Tacitus, and the Greek, Dion Cassius, are the three historians cited as witnesses against Nero. What credit can they claim? Suetonius, from whom the worst stories proceed, was not born till many years after Nero's death, and did not write until some forty years after the events. Tacitus was six years old when Nero died, and wrote many years after the events. Dion Cassius lived some hundred and fifty years later. Let us ask what would be the credibility of historians writing about Cromwell long after the Protectorate had been destroyed, and with nothing but the rumours current in royalist circles to furnish the facts; in such narratives what sort of figure would that heroic man present? Fortunately for his fame he left a party. Grave and thoughtful men preserved traditions and records which rescued him from the vindictive accusations of his enemies. Nero left no defenders. He died after having estranged the Romans. Those whom he had thwarted, those whom he had neglected, those whom he had outraged survived to slander him, and greedy gossip caught up every story without fear of reproof. That Tacitus and Suetonius heard and believed stories of the bad emperor, is no evidence to us that such stories were true; and when we pass from this general scepticism to particular investigation, we find that even had the historians been contemporaries and senators their evidence (in respect to the crimes we shall consider) would be worthless. For, in the first place, we find these writers self-condemned as untrustworthy witnesses, unless when their statements admit of confirmation; and, in the second place, we find them testifying to

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that which is preposterous, when not flagrantly false, testifying to things which they could not have known, and things which could not have happened.

Although my reading of Tacitus and Suetonius has not impressed me with respect for their trustworthiness, but, on the contrary, with surprise at the naïveté and uncritical laxity with which they repeat stories too monstrous for belief,* I do not here intend to rest my case for Nero on such a defect in the witnesses. Nor will I take advantage of the fact, that if they speak against Nero, they speak with almost equal animosity against the Christians; though it is quite arbitrary to refuse that credit to their aspersions of the hated sect, which is given to their aspersions of the hated emperor. If we admit that ignorance, party spirit, and the rancour of jealous opponents misrepresented the Christians, we must also admit that similar sources of misrepresentation existed with respect to Nero. The objection that Tacitus knew nothing of the Christians, and only trusted the reports of their enemies, whereas the acts of Nero were public and notorious, therefore known to many, is specious, but will not bear examination; for it is not the public *acts* of Nero on which rests the infamy of his name, it is on the private *motives* imputed to him for acts he is *supposed* to have committed; precisely as it is on no proved acts of the Christians, but on their "detestable doctrines and avowed hatred of the whole human race" that rests their infamy in the historian's judgment. Now the evidence for the imputations against Nero I affirm to be absurdly defective, resolving itself into mere suspicion, often preposterous. Montaigne, speaking of the severity of Tacitus with regard to Pompey, says pithily, "We ought not to weigh suspicion against evidence, and therefore I do not believe him here."

Britannicus died suddenly. This is a fact, the notoriety of which removes it beyond scepticism. That he was murdered, is an *inference*, and one which we shall presently see reason to discredit altogether. That his death was suspected—nay, believed—to have been caused by poison, and that Nero was suspected of being the poisoner, are also notorious facts; but these suspicions do not convert what is mere inference into fact—they do not, as historians imagine, make the *truth* of the charges as notorious as the charges. No man is convicted on suspicion, unless the suspicion is fortified by a mass of evidence. But before the bar of History accusation often has the weight of proof.

Every reader must be aware of the immense amount of fiction which historians mingle with their narratives, fiction not less purely drawn from their imagination than are similar scenes in romance: interviews are

* It is needless to cite cases; some of them, indeed, cannot be spoken of in English; but any one curious to measure the credulity of these writers may turn to Tacitus, *Annales*, lib. xiii. c. 13 and 17, and Suetonius, *in Nerone*, c. 28. The story of the soldier whose hands fell from his arms and clung to the faggots, owing to the intense cold (Tacit. xiii. c. 35), and various miracles and prodigies gravely narrated, belong to the general credulity of the age.

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circumstantially related, and conversations of some length repeated, in which horrible crimes are planned and damnatory disclosures revealed by the actors, yet the narrator never volunteers to give his guarantee for his accuracy; never informs us who was present at these interviews and took down the conversations, or who betrayed to him secrets of this importance. Conspirators and criminals, we know, sometimes confess, and still oftener betray their comrades; when such confession and betrayal can be adduced, they take their place as evidence. But the mere supposition of an interview in which takes place an imaginary conversation is, in the strictest sense of the word, Fiction, though it passes as History. Nero and his accomplices might have revealed their guilty thoughts, might have confessed their crimes under the stress of death-bed repentance, or under the terrors and agonies of torture; but as no one pretends that this *was* done, we must inquire how historians became acquainted with facts which, from the nature of the case, would be jealously hidden? Thus dialogues which the novelist or dramatist offers as the work of imagination, the historian calls upon us to accept as grave fact. This vice is so deeply rooted in all history that there is scarcely one writer who is conscious of writing pure fiction, when he explains an event by imagining who may have been its prime movers, and what may have been their motives. In a court of law this would be held as childish. In a private circle, when the character of a friend was involved, it would be instantly and indignantly repudiated. But the fiction which would not impose upon a jury, or gain credence in private, is received without hesitation when palmed off as history.

So much for the testimony of the historians in general. I now pass to the appreciation of Tacitus, Suetonius, and Dion Cassius when narrating the crimes of Nero; and my first appeal shall be to Science. Poisoning plays a great part in all ancient annals, and naturally we meet with it in the charges against Nero. The ignorance of ancient writers excuses statements which in our days would be inexcusable; but their credulity is no excuse for ours; what they believed, we ought to have seen at once to be incredible. In the Middle Ages, when an epidemic raged, it was usually asserted that the Jews had poisoned the wells. When a king, or eminent person, died suddenly without ostensible cause, a suggestion of poison naturally arose to explain the death. We are slower in making such accusations now; not because poisoning has become less frequent, but because the public has become more enlightened. Yet—and the remark is curious—our enlightenment is rarely brought to bear upon the past; and we suffer statements respecting historical persons to pass unchallenged which if advanced respecting contemporaries would excite laughter or contempt. No physiologist of the present day would listen without a smile to people who assured him that Louis Napoleon preserved himself by antidotes against attempts at poisoning; it would be as easy to believe in the virtue of amulets. Yet even physiologists read statements of this nature in history with passive acquiescence, owing to that lethargy of

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credulity which, as I have said, comes over them when they are listening to narratives of the past. Thus, to cite but one example, in an elaborate treatise on poisons,* by one of the first toxicologists of our day, may be found repeated the nonsense of Tacitus and Suetonius about Locusta (hereafter to be exhibited), without a hint of its being incredible, without a remark on its contradiction to all scientific knowledge. Had I sufficient leisure I would collect together some of the most famous cases of poisoning recorded in history, and convict them of manifest falsehood from the very details circumstantially narrated; just as one may dissipate such fables as those of Caligula and Cleopatra, who are said to have shown their reckless extravagance by dissolving in their wine pearls of great price, by simply mentioning the fact that pearls are *not* soluble in wine.

But for the present we have only to deal with the poisoning of Britannicus. The case is doubly interesting. It is one of the most "notorious" of murders; and has, I believe, never until this day found any one to question it since Tacitus and Suetonius first circumstantially related the details. Yet a verdict more flagrantly in defiance of common sense and science has seldom been given. Nero, we are told, hated Britannicus because of his sweet voice, and feared him as a possible pretender to the throne. Here are the motives imagined; let us now see them in operation. The tyrant, we are told, unable to bring any accusation against him (which in those days of conspiracy was surely strange), *secretly* resolved to murder him; and this secret resolve becomes known to the narrators, but *how* they gained the knowledge is not mentioned. It was confided to Julius Pollio, tribune of a prætorian cohort, who at that moment held in prison, under sentence of death, Locusta, notorious for her crimes—*multa scelerum fama.* She was ordered to prepare a poison; this poison was administered to Britannicus; but it was too slow in its operation; and Nero, sending for her, beat her, and vowed that she had supplied an antidote. Whereupon she prepared before his own eyes, and in his own room, a deadly poison, the strength of which was essayed on a pig, whose instant death satisfied Nero that now he had got what he desired. The banquet was prepared. Britannicus was seated at a separate table magnificently served, in presence of his relatives and several young nobles. A slave stood at his side to taste of every dish and every beverage, as a precaution against poison; and this slave it was necessary to spare, otherwise his death, occurring at the same time, would betray the murder. To avoid this betrayal the following expedient was imagined. A beverage was presented to Britannicus, after having been tasted, too hot to be drunk; to cool it, a little cold water was poured in, and this cold water contained the poison. No sooner had the prince tasted it than he fell lifeless. The guests were alarmed; some rose to fly; but those who clearly understood it all sat still, their eyes fixed on Nero, who quietly

* Van Hasselt: *Handbuch der Giftlehre, aus dem Holländischen von J. B. Henkel.* 1862.

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assured them that it was only an attack of the epileptic fits to which Britannicus was subject, and that it would soon be over. "After a while the gaiety of the banquet was resumed: *post breve silentium repetita convivii lætitia.*" Britannicus was hastily buried the next day. According to Dion Cassius the face of the corpse had become quite black from the poison; to conceal this Nero whitened it with chalk, but the falling rain washed away this chalk and disclosed the crime which had thus clumsily been concealed. As for Locusta, she was not only rewarded with a free pardon and a grant of land, but "Nero placed some disciples with her to be instructed in her art!"

This is the story. The first remark which Science suggests is that the sudden death of Britannicus may very probably have been due to epilepsy, but *cannot* have been due to poison, since there was no poison known to the ancients capable of such instantaneous effects. In our own days the only poisons known to take effect in a few seconds are prussic acid, oxalic acid, strychnine, woorara, and the venom of certain snakes; and these were not known in Rome. Aconite, which on good grounds is believed to have been a common poison employed in Rome, requires from one to three *hours* to produce fatal effects; and the majority of mineral poisons require several hours. Secondly, Science knows of no poison which instantaneously blackens the face of the victim. There are certain mineral poisons which, taken slowly, will slowly discolour the skin, but not one which, acting rapidly on the organism, rapidly betrays its presence by such discoloration.

Having dismissed Science, we now request Common Sense to step into the witness-box, and she plainly tells us that, as Nero, Locusta, and Pollio were too deeply interested in these transactions to have volunteered a confession of their acts, and as no such confession was publicly extorted from them, there is some difficulty in ascertaining from whom such circumstantial narratives were obtained, and what guarantee they offer for the truth of their narratives. Moreover, supposing it to be a fact that Locusta was pardoned, and had a grant of land—a fact which requires proof—the fiction which connects her with Nero's criminal purposes is betrayed in the mythical addition of the disciples placed with her to be instructed in her art. Had Nero been the monster he is painted, he would not have hesitated to destroy such colleagues when their work was done, and when their testimony might be dangerous.

It is thus perfectly clear that, according to any evidence now accessible, Britannicus was not poisoned, or, if he were poisoned, it was under very different circumstances from those narrated; and it is no less clear that Nero's supposed share in the murder rests on nothing but the general suspicion that he may have wished for the young man's death.

With regard to the accusation of Nero having murdered his mother, Science and Common Sense are not less conspicuously adverse to it. Suetonius assures us that thrice Nero attempted to poison Agrippina, but thrice was foiled by her having had the precaution to prepare against such

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attempts by taking an antidote. To the ancient mind this was eminently credible. To moderns it is eminently ridiculous. Ancient physiology having no distinct idea of the nature of poisons, and how they affect the organism, found no difficulty in believing in the existence of an universal antidote. Modern physiology smiles when an antidote is mentioned, except as a specific remedy under certain specific conditions, and for specific poisons. To enable the reader thoroughly to understand the extent of the ancient ignorance, and the precision with which modern science limits the idea of antidotes, it is necessary to range the various known poisons under the heads of their peculiar effects on the organism. Various classifications have been proposed; the following seems to me the most serviceable.

Poisons may be ranged under three classes: 1. As *irritant*, that is to say, exaggerating the vital activity of an organ or system, by its stimulus, and thus producing a disturbance of the organic equilibrium, which may be fatal when carried beyond a certain limit. 2. As *narcotic*, that is to say, depressing the vital activity by its effects on the nervous centres, and when carried beyond a certain limit admitting of no recovery from the depression. 3. As *corrosive* or *histolytic*, that is to say, destroying the tissues with which it is in contact.

The reader perceives at once that these different effects must be produced by very different substances, and require very different substances as remedies. Each class of poisons calls for a specific class of antidotes. The wrong antidotes will either aggravate the evil, or remain inoperative. To give the right antidote it is requisite first that we know what the poison is which has been administered, and next, what the substance is which neutralizes that poison. Suppose sulphuric acid has been administered; if we know this to be the fact, either from the presence of the poison, or its bottle, or from our skill in recognizing its effect, we have mastered the initial difficulty, and one rarely to be mastered in cases of secret poisoning. Now comes the more important step of choosing the antidote: if we try brandy, or laudanum, we only increase the evil; but if we have sufficient knowledge to recognize the nature of the action which sulphuric acid effects on the tissues, namely, *corrosive*, we see at once that to annihilate its corrosive properties we must cause it to combine with some substance which will make it harmless. We know that the sulphate of lime is harmless, and we know that chalk converts sulphuric acid into this harmless compound; we therefore administer chalk, and, if not too late, we counteract the poison. Further observe, that a remedy which, when administered rapidly after the poison has been taken, will, to a great extent, counteract the effect of that poison, is no remedy when administered beforehand. The ancient idea of an antidote, which would protect a man against an anticipated attempt at poisoning, is more irrational than the idea of a healthy man protecting himself against some unknown disease by taking a medicine believed to be effective in the case of a known disease.

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Such being the state of the case, the reader at once sees the preposterousness of the ancient idea of antidotes when chemistry was not in existence, and when toxicology was undreamed of; and he will perceive that when he is called upon to believe in Agrippina having fortified herself against attempts at poison by the precautionary measure of swallowing antidotes, he might as rationally believe that a man escaped the perils of drowning, fire, sunstroke, and fever, by wearing a breastplate. Agrippina could not divine what poison would be employed against her; nor could she anticipate the discoveries of chemistry by a knowledge of what substances counteracted the effects of these poisons, or rendered them inoperative.

Fiction the first having been thus exposed, let us ask why Agrippina, with the full knowledge of her son's attempts at poisoning, should not have guarded herself against him in other directions? The historians are silent on this point. They gravely narrate how, when Nero had failed with poison, he had recourse to melodramatic contrivances, such, for example, as loosening the floor over her bed-chamber, so that its fall might crush her. This also failed. She would not be crushed. Whereupon Anicetus, the naval prefect, who detested Agrippina, offered his services. Here a juryman would assuredly ask how this offer became known, and whether Anicetus had himself publicly confessed his share in the crime; or even whether he had been publicly accused of it. But History is a Muse, and is less troubled with fastidious doubts on matters of detail. She narrates, she does not undertake to prove: *scribere ad narrandum non ad probandum.* Her narrative runs thus: Anicetus constructed a vessel, which, when out at sea, was suddenly to collapse, as if by accident, and every one on board would then perish. Nero, says Tacitus, smiled at the ingenuity of the plan—*placuit solertia;* and we may smile at the credulity of the historian. The plan, with all its pleasant ingenuity, turned out an ignoble failure; the old cat was not thus to be drowned, but swam ashore, and when on *terra firma*, "as the sole means of escape was to pretend to no suspicion," she despatched Agerinus, one of her freedmen, with a message to Nero, narrating her accident, and assuring him of her escape, at the same time requesting her son not to come to her, for she needed quiet and repose. Not thus was Nero to be deceived. He knew that his attempt had been discovered; and in terror lest she should excite the wrath of senate and soldiers against him, he sent for Seneca and Burrhus. Tacitus does not pretend that these men were aware of the attempt, but he does pretend to a knowledge of what passed at the interview, and what passed in their minds, and this it is: "They both remained silent for a long while, fearing lest they should not be attended to. They also thought that Nero would perish unless his mother perished. At length Seneca asked Burrhus if the order should be given to the soldiers to put her to death. Burrhus replied that the troops were too much attached to the house of Cæsar; and he thought, therefore, that it now remained with Anicetus to execute his threats. Anicetus with alacrity begged to be per-

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mitted to complete his crime (*nihil cunctatus poscit summam sceleris*). Nero joyously consented."

Here the difficult juryman, disrespectful to History, requires to know *how* Tacitus came by this knowledge. It is not the revelation which any one of the conspirators would spontaneously have made; and although both Seneca and Burrhus subsequently perished by Nero's order, neither of them accused Nero in the exasperation of their defeat. Whence then these details, so important, so precise? Nor does Tacitus stop here. He knows that Anicetus by way of pretext prepared a scene, and a very clumsy scene. When Agerinus arrived with the message from Agrippina, Anicetus threw a sword between his feet, and then pretending to have surprised him with this weapon, accused him of being an assassin sent by Agrippina. The purpose of this comedy was to make it believed, that Agrippina, on the discovery of her attempt, had committed suicide.*

It is characteristic of the supreme disregard of probability with which these narrations are conducted, that Tacitus, immediately after expounding the secret schemes of Anicetus, and asserting, as if it were a notorious fact, that Anicetus wished the death of Agrippina to be publicly accepted as a suicide, proceeds to tell how the troops were led to the attack of Agrippina's palace by this very Anicetus, making their murderous way through the crowd which had assembled there to congratulate her on her escape from drowning. So little is the pretext of suicide attended to, that the troops force their way into her chamber, and there butcher her. "These facts," he adds, "are undisputed. Some say that Nero examined the corpse and admired its beauty; others deny this." It is pleasant to find even so faint a gleam of scepticism as this; especially when we read in Suetonius such "other circumstances which are related upon good authority" (only the authority is never given,) as that "he went to view her corpse, and, handling her limbs, disparaged some and praised others, and then called for drink. Nevertheless, he was never able to bear the pangs of conscience, though he was supported by the congratulations of the soldiers and the senate. He frequently declared that he was haunted by his mother's ghost, and persecuted by the Furies with whips and burning torches. He even attempted to soften her rage, by bringing up her ghost by magical arts." This remorse of Nero is painted by Tacitus in his Caravaggio style; but he does not claim any "good authority" for what he says, although one would be glad to know it. No historian pretends to explain how the senate and people could celebrate with magnificent rejoicings the escape of their emperor from his mother's plots; nor how they could continue to serve and flatter him, if Nero openly declared himself terror-stricken by remorse. That the senate was servile is credible; but there are limits even to servility; and the moral indifference of this senate needs explanation. It is true

* Suetonius makes Nero drop the sword, and order the arrest of Agerinus, inventing also the story of his mother's suicide.

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that Tacitus remarks on the indifference of the gods who permitted the reign of such a monster to be prolonged; and *this* is the more noticeable, because we are told in the next sentence that the gods were scandalized, and showed their wrath in prodigies: the sun was eclipsed, thunderbolts fell in all the fourteen districts of the city, and a woman gave birth to a serpent.

How are we to explain the death of Agrippina? For myself I confess an inability to shape the story in any reliable sequence of events. The evidence is wanting. All that is indisputable is that Agrippina was said by Seneca, in a letter written to the senate, to have plotted against her son, and to have committed suicide on learning that the plot had been detected. This the senate and the people believed, or pretended to believe. I think it most probable that they did believe it, and not without good grounds; for Agrippina had once before been accused of such a plot, which Nero was made to believe. It is quite possible that Agrippina was calumniated; but if Nero believed the calumny, even for a day, the senate and people may have believed it. Moreover, the character of Burrhus and of Seneca ought to have some weight with us. If they were not faultless, at least they were admirable men. To believe that they abetted the murder of a mother by her own son would require cogent evidence; and we have absolutely no evidence, positive or presumptive, on which to found such a suspicion. In conclusion, be it observed, that I am not called upon to clear up a transaction so obscurely reported, but only to point out the incredibility of the reports. Nero may, in his alarm, have ordered his mother's arrest; she may have lost her life in the struggle of resisting such an order; or may have committed suicide. In after years public rumour, never nicely discriminating, may have transformed this into a belief of Nero's having murdered her. But as to evidence, there is simply *none*. The narrative of historians is baseless and inept. Where so much is flagrantly absurd we may doubt if any part be true.

Let us now turn our eyes upon Rome in flames. That Britannicus died suddenly, is a fact; that he was poisoned, we have scientific reasons for disbelieving; that Nero was the poisoner is without a shadow of proof stronger than idle suspicion. But although fiction has woven its tangled threads round a nucleus of fact, there are among these threads two of some strength, namely, the motive which *might* have prompted the crime, and the presence of Nero at the fatal banquet. It is otherwise with the fiction surrounding the historical fact of Rome in flames. There is no assignable motive which can point suspicion at Nero; and he happened to be absent from Rome when the fire broke out. The silly credulity which for centuries has accepted this story, with its mythical embellishment of Nero in mad exultation at the success of his wantonness fiddling above the burning ruins, is a striking example of what will pass as history.

Suetonius gravely relates that some one having quoted a Greek verse, the meaning of which is, "After my death I care not if the world perish in flames," Nero exclaimed, "Nay, let it perish while I live." "And,"

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adds the historian, "he acted accordingly; for, pretending to take offence at the ugliness of the old buildings and the narrowness of the streets, he set the city on fire; and this was done so openly that several consulars found tow and torches in the houses of his attendants, but were afraid to meddle with them. He knocked down the walls of the granaries, which were of stone, in order that the flames might spread. The fire he beheld from a tower on the top of the villa of Mecænas, and being hugely diverted with the splendours of the flames, he sang the *Destruction of Troy* in the dress worn by him on the stage." Yet the people patiently submitted to be ruined, and thus openly mocked, not even wreaking their vengeance on the attendants!

Suetonius, in a previous chapter, has recorded of Nero that he ordered piazzas to be erected before all the houses, great and small, in order that in case of fire there might be a commanding position for extinguishing the flames; and these piazzas were constructed at his expense: so little did he disregard the interests of his subjects!

Tacitus, a graver writer, tells the story with less manifest fiction. He says that the fire was by some attributed to accident, and by others to the wickedness of Nero; adding, "Nero at that time was at Antium, and only returned to Rome on the day when the flames approached his own palace, which he had built to join the palace of Augustus with the garden of Mecænas. This palace and all the buildings around it were burned. To console the people, wandering and houseless, he opened the Campus Martius, and the monuments of Agrippa, as well as his own gardens. Here sheds were hastily constructed to shelter the poorest. Furniture was fetched from Ostia, and the price of corn was considerably reduced."

Thus the public acts of Nero are not only those of one innocent of the imputed crime, but are those of an emperor really concerned for the misfortunes of his people. It is quite *possible* that such acts may have been mere hypocritical attempts to disarm suspicion; and if the crime were proven, or even probable, such an interpretation might pass. But what evidence, what probability is there, to justify such an accusation? The vague rumours of an exasperated people. How *these* arise, and how supremely they dispense with evidence, need not be told. Have we not in our own time known the famine in Ireland boldly assigned to the wrath of heaven because the words *Defensor Fidei* accidentally were omitted in a new issue of silver coin? and this accusation proceeding, not from ignorant and turbulent mobs, but from the ignorant and bigoted "religious world," as it unjustifiably calls itself.

Jurymen accustomed to deliver verdicts in cases brought by Fire Insurance Offices must know the kind of evidence which they demand, before they believe that a fraudulent tradesman has set fire to his own premises. I ask them if they can see *anything* of this kind in the accusation against Nero? Without demanding the completeness of circumstantial evidence which would coerce their verdict against a living man, I simply ask whether there is *any* evidence against Nero? All that

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historians have produced has been given in the foregoing narrative; its value may now be estimated.

The last crime to be noticed here is the murder of his wife. Suetonius assures us that he thrice attempted to strangle Octavia, and having failed in these attempts, divorced her; but Suetonius omits to explain how so sanguinary a tyrant should so easily have been baffled, or why he did not divorce her at once. His next wife, Poppæa, when about to become a mother, he killed with a kick, "only because she took the liberty of chiding him for coming home late."

I waive the discussion of all the other crimes, merely noting by the way that Nero, on the very testimony of his accusers, was singularly free from cruelty, saving many whom the senate would have destroyed. In those turbulent days he had many times to order the execution of conspirators—some of these were very possibly innocent; but we read of no such wholesale slaughter as is recorded of Augustus, who in one day put to death three hundred senators and nobles. And does not Suetonius record the public act of interdicting that the gladiators should be killed, in the spectacle which he gave? Even the criminals were not suffered to be butchered: *neminem occidit, ne noxiorum quidem.* No one accuses Nero of hypocrisy, yet we are told that when a warrant for execution was brought to him for signature he sighed, and exclaimed, "Would I had never learned to write!" When Suilius was condemned, the senate wished to involve his son in the accusation; but Nero "interfered, considering the vengeance ample."

Indeed were it my purpose to prove historically that Nero, so far from being a monster, was a kind, gentle, and in many respects admirable ruler, I could without difficulty cite testimonies from his accusers which would somewhat stagger the reader; the more so because such testimonies, referring to public acts, always less open to question than private motives, would carry with them peculiar significance. But such is not my purpose. I distrust the evidence all round. At any rate I am not disposed to award that confidence to the narratives of his virtues which I withhold from the narratives of his crimes. Writers so demonstrably untrustworthy on many points, where their statements are explicit, forfeit our trust on all.

All that is thoroughly reliable is the fact that a tradition of Nero's infamy existed, and was unhesitatingly accepted: a tradition all the more noticeable since it was coupled with one which made his early years of brilliant promise, so that Trajan in after days expressed the wish that his whole reign might rival the splendour of Nero's commencement. That he was once beloved by the Roman people is undisputed; how came he to forfeit that regard? how came he to leave a name surpassing in infamy even that of Caligula or Tiberius? The adage assures us that "where there is smoke there is fire;" shall we try and penetrate the wreathing columns of smoke, and reach the fiery embers in this case? It cannot, unhappily, be done with any assurance of success, for no amount of

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patient investigation will recover any trustworthy evidence. All must be conjectural, and the conjectures rest upon rumours, anecdotes, unverified assertions. Nevertheless, dealing with such evidence as at present exists, a sufficiently intelligible and credible account may be elicited. This I proceed to arrange, warning the reader of its conjectural character.

Granting, as we may, the probability of great self-indulgent licentiousness in a young man placed in so exceptional a position of power—a position dangerous to the highest virtue, from the absence of all restraints on the caprices of will and passion, except such restraints as issue from a high moral severity—a position full of temptations and of opportunities, capable of maddening an inferior nature; granting, as we must, the numerous enemies created by his excesses, and even by his very generosities, which would raise extravagant hopes in all related to those he favoured, and corresponding exasperation in all whom he passed over, we have an initial probability in supposing that the reputation of such an emperor could only be rescued from contempt or infamy by conspicuous glory; unless he flattered the imaginations, or strikingly advanced the interests of his people, he would inevitably incur their scorn or hatred. Most of the Roman emperors suffered from this cause. If Nero suffered more than others who were equally if not more criminal, it was, I imagine, because he for the first time inflicted an unpardonable outrage on the Roman pride. It is not easy for us, in our democratic age, to realize the feeling of sanctity which surrounded the imperial purple. Then it could be truly said, that there was a divinity to hedge a king. We are so far removed from such a mental condition that it costs a considerable effort to believe that the Emperor was really held as a God, not simply in the apotheosis which succeeded his reign, but actually during his lifetime. Yet it is necessary that we should make this effort, it is necessary we should vividly realize to ourselves the fact that the emperor was, not simply in flattering titles, but in honest belief, invested with a divine sanctity, a sanctity surpassing that which now invests the Papal throne, if we would understand the deep offence given to all that was grave and dignified in Rome by those wanton and undignified displays of personal and petty vanity with which Nero disgraced the purple. These vanities, which in a private man would have elicited no more than a contemptuous smile, in a senator would have been offensive, in an emperor were outrages.

Something of what Rome felt may be imagined if we picture to ourselves the feeling of our own aristocracy, had Lord Byron, not content with "putting on the gloves" with Jackson, so far yielded to an inordinate desire for display as to have actually entered the ring and fought Tom Crib for the champion's belt; or, better still, if we imagine the uproar resounding through all the counties of Great Britain, if an agile archbishop, prouder of his agility than of his learning, should publicly exhibit his skill on the tight rope and trapeze. It would be of no use for muscular Christians to urge that muscular agility was in itself admirable, and that

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there was nothing contrary to virtue and piety in the tight-rope and trapeze; so vehement a shock to all our sentiments of the becoming, and so wanton a disregard of all the dignities and gravities of office, would prepare the mind of the people to credit any stories, however infamous, which malice might circulate against such an archbishop. Showing so conspicuous a disregard to all the decencies of public life, he would be held capable of far greater disregard of the moralities. If vanity could make him thus overstep the rigid limits of propriety, how much more irresistible would be the impulses of passion? Thus would men argue; not very logically, perhaps, but with a coercive force no arguments could withstand.

Now something of this must have filled the minds of the Romans when in their astonished wrath they saw Nero so far carried away by his desire for applause, that not content with wasting his time and degrading his manhood by the composition of feeble verses, the twanging of lyres, and the driving of chariots—the occupations of slaves—he must also degrade his sacred office, and step from the throne upon the public stage, to court the plaudits of the populace like a vile histrion. It is not long since even in Europe the actor was an object of social scorn; and still the law brands him as a vagabond, although society has learned to respect him as a citizen. In Rome the degradation of *all* artists was such as we can with difficulty conceive. To play on the lyre, and to dance, were held no less unworthy of an aristocracy, than juggling and tumbling in our days. And it is curious to notice the emphasis given to this feeling in Juvenal's indignant comparison of Nero to Orestes. Both were matricides, but Orestes was honourable and Nero execrable. Why? Not because the mother of Orestes was notoriously guilty, but because "*he* never sang upon the stage, nor wrote the poem of the *Troics*,"—two crimes of Nero. "These are the works and these the acts of a noble ruler delighting to prostitute his rank by disgraceful exhibitions of himself on a foreign stage."

> Hæc opera, atque hæ sunt generosi principis artes
> Gaudentis fœdo peregrina ad pulpita cantu
> Prostitui.

It is, therefore, perfectly intelligible, though at first sight ludicrous, that when Julius Vindex raised the standard of revolt, his fiercest accusation against the emperor, and one which justified the soldiery in deposing him from the throne he disgraced, was that of being "a miserable harper." And Tacitus, speaking of Nero's practice of singing songs to the harp during his banquets—because it was the custom of ancient kings and chiefs—characterizes it as "not less disgraceful (*non minus fœdum*) than driving a chariot in public."

Such being the state of Roman feeling, we can be at no loss to discover the cause of the senate and people having learned to despise and detest an emperor who could wantonly outrage it by his displays of

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vanity. I am not disposed to believe all the stories told respecting these displays. Gossip and exaggeration have doubtless been at work here; and the excesses of his vanity may be as open to doubt as the excesses of his criminality. But they were believed; and the belief is sufficient to account for his reputation. The fact of his public exhibitions scarcely admits of question; and it is a fact which furnishes us with two keys: one is the revelation of Nero's weakness in being unable to resist the impulses of vanity, however unbecoming, and this weakness may not unreasonably be supposed to have vitiated his private life, giving him up to manifold indulgences; the other key is the profound disgust and dishonouring hatred which it would inspire in all the graver minds, who saw the imperial purple thus degraded.

Here ends my conjecture. The less disputable portion of this essay stands on other ground. Whether we choose to believe that the traditions about Nero imply great substantive criminality in him, or only mythical exaggerations, I hope it has been made clear that the four capital crimes with which his memory is loaded, not only want every vestige of rational evidence, so that never for one moment could the accusations have been brought into a court of law, but are signally incredible, and never could have been admitted even into the laxities of history, otherwise than as rumours, had it not been for the causes which repress historical scepticism and make men, who are vigilant in jurisprudence and science, blindly credulous in history.

Finally, let me repeat that the object of this essay is less the vindication of Nero's character, than an appeal to the common sense of mankind to be vigilant in its demands of *evidence*, when called upon either in history, or in the gossip circulated about living men, to accept statements affecting character and motives. What constitutes sufficient evidence may, in many cases, be open to debate; but every man can exercise the preliminary caution of asking *what* is the evidence upon which he is called upon to believe a statement; and he can then judge whether he is giving his assent to unauthenticated rumours, born of malice, and exaggerated by thoughtlessness, or to statements which carry with them at least the guarantee of direct testimony, the value of which may be estimated.

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THE

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Romola.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

ROMOLA'S WAKING.

ROMOLA in her boat passed from dreaming into long deep sleep, and then again from deep sleep into busy dreaming, till at last she felt herself stretching out her arms in the court of the Bargello, where the flickering flames of the tapers seemed to get stronger and stronger till the dark scene was blotted out with light. Her eyes opened, and she saw it was the light of morning. Her boat was lying still in a little creek: on her right hand lay the speckless sapphire-blue of the Mediterranean; on her left one of those scenes which were and still are repeated again and again, like a sweet rhythm, on the shores of that loveliest sea.

In a deep curve of the mountains lay a breadth of green land, curtained by gentle tree-shadowed slopes leaning towards the rocky heights. Up these slopes might be seen here and there, gleaming between the tree-tops, a pathway leading to a little irregular mass of building that seemed to have clambered in a hasty way up the mountain-side, and taken a difficult stand there for the sake

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of showing the tall belfry as a sight of beauty to the scattered and clustered houses of the village below. The rays of the newly-risen sun fell obliquely on the westward horn of this crescent-shaped nook: all else lay in dewy shadow. No sound came across the stillness; the very waters seemed to have curved themselves there for rest.

The delicious sun-rays fell on Romola and thrilled her gently like a caress. She lay motionless, hardly watching the scene; rather, feeling simply the presence of peace and beauty. While we are still in our youth there can always come, in our early waking, moments when mere passive existence is itself a Lethe, when the exquisiteness of subtle indefinite sensation creates a bliss which is without memory and without desire. As the soft warmth penetrated Romola's young limbs, as her eyes rested on this sequestered luxuriance, it seemed that the agitating past had glided away like that dark scene in the Bargello, and that the afternoon dreams of her girlhood had really come back to her. For a minute or two the oblivion was untroubled; she did not even think that she could rest here for ever, she only felt that she rested. Then she became distinctly conscious that she was lying in the boat which had been bearing her over the waters all through the night. Instead of bringing her to death, it had been the gently lulling cradle of a new life. And in spite of her evening despair she was glad that the morning had come to her again. glad to think that she was resting in the familiar sunlight rather than in the unknown regions of death. *Could* she not rest here? No sound from Florence would reach her. Already oblivion was troubled; from behind the golden haze were piercing domes and towers and walls, parted by a river and enclosed by the green hills.

She rose from her reclining posture and sat up in the boat, willing, if she could, to resist the rush of thoughts that urged themselves along with the conjecture how far the boat had carried her. Why need she mind? This was a sheltered nook where there were simple villagers who would not harm her. For a little while, at least, she might rest and resolve on nothing. Presently she would go and get some bread and milk, and then she would nestle in the green quiet, and feel that there was a pause in her life. She turned to watch the crescent-shaped valley, that she might get back the soothing sense of peace and beauty which she had felt in her first waking.

She had not been in this attitude of contemplation more than a few minutes when across the stillness there came a piercing cry; not a brief cry, but continuous and more and more intense. Romola felt sure it was the cry of a little child in distress that no one came to help. She started up and put one foot on the side of the boat ready to leap on to the beach; but she paused there and listened. the mother of the child must be near, the cry must soon cease. But it went on, and drew Romola so irresistibly, seeming the more piteous to her for the sense of peace which had preceded it, that she jumped on to the beach and walked many paces before she knew what direction she would take. The cry, she thought, came

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from some rough garden growth many yards on her right hand, where she saw a half-ruined hovel. She climbed over a low broken stone fence, and made her way across patches of weedy green crops and ripe but neglected corn. The cry grew plainer, and, convinced that she was right, she hastened towards the hovel; but even in that hurried walk she felt an oppressive change in the air as she left the sea behind. Was there some taint lurking amongst the green luxuriance that had seemed such an inviting shelter from the heat of the coming day? She could see the opening into the hovel now, and the cry was darting through her like a pain. The next moment her foot was within the doorway, but the sight she beheld in the sombre light arrested her with a shock of awe and horror. On the straw, with which the floor was scattered, lay three dead bodies, one of a tall man, one of a girl about eight years old, and one of a young woman whose long black hair was being clutched and pulled by a living child—the child that was sending forth the piercing cry. Romola's experience in the haunts of death and disease made thought and action prompt: she lifted the little living child, and in trying to soothe it on her bosom, still bent to look at the bodies and see if they were really dead. The strongly marked type of race in their features and their peculiar garb made her conjecture that they were Spanish or Portuguese Jews, who had perhaps been put ashore and abandoned there by rapacious sailors, to whom their property remained as a prey. Such things were happening continually to Jews compelled to abandon their homes by the Inquisition: the cruelty of greed thrust them from the sea, and the cruelty of superstition thrust them back to it.

"But surely," thought Romola, "I shall find some woman in the village whose mother's heart will not let her refuse to tend this helpless child—if the real mother is indeed dead."

This doubt remained, because while the man and girl looked emaciated and also showed signs of having been long dead, the woman seemed to have been hardier, and had not quite lost the robustness of her form. Romola, kneeling, was about to lay her hand on the heart; but as she lifted the piece of yellow woollen drapery that lay across the bosom, she saw the purple spots which marked the familiar pestilence. Then it struck her that if the villagers knew of this, she might have more difficulty than she had expected in getting help from them; they would perhaps shrink from her with that child in her arms. But she had money to offer them, and they would not refuse to give her some goats' milk in exchange for it.

She set out at once towards the village, her mind filled now with the effort to soothe the little dark creature, and with wondering how she should win some woman to be good to it. She could not help hoping a little in a certain awe she had observed herself to inspire, when she appeared, unknown and unexpected, in her religious dress. As she passed across a breadth of cultivated ground, she noticed, with wonder, that little patches of corn mingled with the other crops had been left to over-ripe-

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ness untouched by the sickle, and that golden apples and dark figs lay rotting on the weedy ground. There were grassy spaces within sight, but no cow, or sheep, or goat. The stillness began to have something fearful in it to Romola; she hurried along towards the thickest cluster of houses, where there would be the most life to appeal to on behalf of the helpless life she carried in her arms. But she had picked up two figs, and bit little pieces from the sweet pulp to still the child with.

She entered between two lines of dwellings. It was time that villagers should have been stirring long ago, but not a soul was in sight. The air was becoming more and more oppressive, laden, it seemed, with some horrible impurity. There was a door open; she looked in, and saw grim emptiness. Another open door; and through that she saw a man lying dead with all his garments on, his head lying athwart a spade handle, and an earthenware cruse in his hand, as if he had fallen suddenly.

Romola felt horror taking possession of her. Was she in a village of the unburied dead? She wanted to listen if there were any faint sound, but the child cried out afresh when she ceased to feed it, and the cry filled her ears. At last she saw a figure crawling slowly out of a house, and soon sinking back in a sitting posture against the wall. She hastened towards the figure; it was a young woman in fevered anguish, and she, too, held a pitcher in her hand. As Romola approached her she did not start; the one need was too absorbing for any other idea to impress itself on her.

"Water! get me water!" she said, with a moaning utterance.

Romola stooped to take the pitcher, and said gently in her ear, "You shall have water; can you point towards the well?"

The hand was lifted towards the more distant end of the little street, and Romola set off at once with as much speed as she could use under the difficulty of carrying the pitcher as well as feeding the child. But the little one was getting more content as the morsels of sweet pulp were repeated, and ceased to distress her with its cry, so that she could give a less distracted attention to the objects around her.

The well lay twenty yards or more beyond the end of the street, and as Romola was approaching it her eyes were directed to the opposite green slope immediately below the church. High up, on a patch of grass between the trees, she had descried a cow and a couple of goats, and she tried to trace a line of path that would lead her close to that cheering sight, when once she had done her errand to the well. Occupied in this way, she was not aware that she was very near the well, and that some one approaching it on the other side had fixed a pair of astonished eyes upon her.

Romola certainly presented a sight which, at that moment and in that place, could hardly have been seen without some pausing and palpitation. With her gaze fixed intently on the distant slope, the long lines of her thick grey garment giving a gliding character to her rapid walk, her hair rolling backward and illuminated on the left side by the sun-rays, the little

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olive baby on her right arm now looking out with jet black eyes, she might well startle that youth of fifteen, accustomed to swing the censer in the presence of a Madonna less fair and marvellous than this.

"She carries a pitcher in her hand—to fetch water for the sick. It is the Holy Mother, come to take care of the people who have the pestilence."

It was a sight of awe: she would, perhaps, be angry with those who fetched water for themselves only. The youth flung down his vessel in terror, and Romola, aware now of some one near her, saw the black and white figure fly as if for dear life towards the slope she had just been contemplating. But remembering the parched sufferer, she half filled her pitcher quickly and hastened back.

Entering the house to look for a small cup, she saw salt meat and meal: there were no signs of want in the dwelling. With nimble movements she seated baby on the ground, and lifted a cup of water to the sufferer, who drank eagerly and then closed her eyes and leaned her head backward, seeming to give herself up to the sense of relief. Presently she opened her eyes, and, looking at Romola, said languidly,—

"Who are you?"

'I came over the sea," said Romola. "I only came this morning. Are all the people dead in these houses?"

"I think they are all ill now—all that are not dead. My father and my sister lie dead upstairs, and there is no one to bury them: and soon I shall die."

"Not so, I hope," said Romola. "I am come to take care of you. I am used to the pestilence; I am not afraid. But there must be some left who are not ill. I saw a youth running towards the mountain when I went to the well."

"I cannot tell. When the pestilence came, a great many people went away, and drove off the cows and goats. Give me more water!"

Romola, suspecting that if she followed the direction of the youth's flight, she should find some men and women who were still healthy and able, determined to seek them out at once, that she might at least win them to take care of the child, and leave her free to come back and see how many living needed help, and how many dead needed burial. She trusted to her powers of persuasion to conquer the aid of the timorous, when once she knew what was to be done.

Promising the sick woman to come back to her, she lifted the dark bantling again, and set off towards the slope. She felt no burden of choice on her now, no longing for death. She was thinking how she would go to the other sufferers, as she had gone to that fevered woman.

But, with the child on her arm, it was not so easy to her as usual to walk up a slope, and it seemed a long while before the winding path took her near the cow and the goats. She was beginning herself to feel faint from heat, hunger, and thirst, and as she reached a double turning, she paused to consider whether she would not wait near the cow, which some one was likely to come and milk soon, rather than toil up to the church

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before she had taken any rest. Raising her eyes to measure the steep distance, she saw peeping between the boughs, not more than five yards off, a broad round face, watching her attentively, and lower down the black skirt of a priest's garment, and a hand grasping a bucket. She stood mutely observing, and the face, too, remained motionless. Romola had often witnessed the overpowering force of dread in cases of pestilence, and she was cautious.

Raising her voice in a tone of gentle pleading, she said, "I came over the sea. I am hungry, and so is the child. Will you not give us some milk?"

Romola had divined part of the truth, but she had not divined that preoccupation of the priest's mind which charged her words with a strange significance. Only a little while ago, the young acolyte had brought word to the Padre that he had seen the Holy Mother with the Babe, fetching water for the sick: she was as tall as the cypresses, and had a light about her head, and she looked up at the church. The *pievano** had not listened with entire belief: he had been more than fifty years in the world without having any vision of the Madonna, and he thought the boy might have misinterpreted the unexpected appearance of a villager. But he had been made uneasy, and before venturing to come down and milk his cow, he had repeated many Aves. The pievano's conscience tormented him a little: he trembled at the pestilence, but he also trembled at the thought of the mild-faced Mother, conscious that that Invisible Mercy might demand something more of him than prayers and "Hails." In this state of mind—unable to banish the image the boy had raised of the Mother with the glory about her tending the sick—the pievano had come down to milk his cow, and had suddenly caught sight of Romola pausing at the parted way. Her pleading words, with their strange refinement of tone and accent, instead of being explanatory, had a preternatural sound for him. Yet he did not quite believe he saw the Holy Mother: he was in a state of alarmed hesitation. If anything miraculous were happening, he felt there was no strong presumption that the miracle would be in his favour. He dared not run away; he dared not advance.

"Come down," said Romola, after a pause. "Do not fear. Fear rather to deny food to the hungry when they ask you."

A moment after the boughs were parted, and the complete figure of a thick-set priest, with a broad, harmless face, his black frock much worn and soiled, stood, bucket in hand, looking at her timidly, and still keeping aloof as he took the path towards the cow in silence.

Romola followed him and watched him without speaking again, as he seated himself against the tethered cow, and, when he had nervously drawn some milk, gave it to her in a brass cup he carried with him in the bucket. As Romola put the cup to the lips of the eager child, and afterwards drank some milk herself, the Padre observed her from his wooden stool with a timidity that changed its character a little. He recognized the

* Parish-priest.

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Hebrew baby, he was certain that he had a substantial woman before him; but there was still something strange and unaccountable in Romola's presence in this spot, and the Padre had a presentiment that things were going to change with him. Moreover, that Hebrew baby was terribly associated with the dread of pestilence.

Nevertheless, when Romola smiled at the little one sucking its own milky lips, and stretched out the brass cup again, saying, "Give us more, good father," he obeyed less nervously than before.

Romola, on her side, was not unobservant; and when the second supply of milk had been drunk, she looked down at the round-headed man, and said with mild decision,

"And now tell me, father, how this pestilence came, and why you let your people die without the sacraments, and lie unburied. For I am come over the sea to help those who are left alive—and you, too, will help them now."

He told her the story of the pestilence: and while he was telling it, the youth, who had fled before, had come peeping and advancing gradually, till at last he stood and watched the scene from behind a neighbouring bush.

Three families of Jews, twenty souls in all, had been put ashore many weeks ago, some of them already ill of the pestilence. The villagers, said the priest, had of course refused to give shelter to the miscreants, otherwise than in a distant hovel, and under heaps of straw. But when the strangers had died of the plague, and some of the people had thrown the bodies into the sea, the sea had brought them back again in a great storm, and everybody was smitten with terror. A grave was dug, and the bodies were buried; but then the pestilence attacked the Christians, and the greater number of the villagers went away over the mountain, driving away their few cattle, and carrying provisions. The priest had not fled; he had stayed and prayed for the people, and he had prevailed on the youth Jacopo to stay with him; but he confessed that a mortal terror of the plague had taken hold of him, and he had not dared to go down into the valley.

"You will fear no longer, father," said Romola, in a tone of encouraging authority; "you will come down with me, and we will see who is living, and we will look for the dead to bury them. I have walked about for months where the pestilence was, and see, I am strong. Jacopo will come with us," she added, motioning to the peeping lad, who came slowly from behind his defensive bush, as if invisible threads were dragging him.

"Come, Jacopo," said Romola again, smiling at him, "you will carry the child for me. See! your arms are strong, and I am tired."

That was a dreadful proposal to Jacopo, and to the priest also; but they were both under a peculiar influence forcing them to obey. The suspicion that Romola was a supernatural form was dissipated, but their minds were filled instead with the more effective sense that she was a human being whom God had sent over the sea to command them.

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"Now we will carry down the milk," said Romola, "and see if any one wants it."

So they went all together down the slope, and that morning the sufferers saw help come to them in their despair. There were hardly more than a score alive in the whole valley; but all of these were comforted, most were saved, and the dead were buried.

In this way days, weeks, and months passed with Romola, till the men were digging and sowing again, till the women smiled at her as they carried their great vases on their heads to the well, and the Hebrew baby was a tottering tumbling Christian, Benedetto by name, having been baptized in the church on the mountain side. But by that time she herself was suffering from the fatigue and languor that must come after a continuous strain on mind and body. She had taken for her dwelling one of the houses abandoned by their owners, standing a little aloof from the village street, and here on a thick heap of clean straw—a delicious bed for those who do not dream of down—she felt glad to lie still through most of the daylight hours, taken care of along with the little Benedetto by a woman whom the pestilence had widowed.

Every day the Padre and Jacopo and the small flock of surviving villagers paid their visit to this cottage to see the blessed Lady, and to bring her of their best as an offering—honey, fresh cakes, eggs, and polenta. It was a sight they could none of them forget, a sight they all told of in their old age—how the sweet and sainted Lady with her fair face, her golden hair, and her brown eyes that had a blessing in them, lay weary with her labours after she had been sent over the sea to help them in their extremity, and how the queer little black Benedetto used to crawl about the straw by her side and want everything that was brought to her, and she always gave him a bit of what she took, and told them if they loved her they must be good to Benedetto.

Many legends were afterwards told in that valley about the blessed Lady who came over the sea, but they were legends by which all who heard might know that in times gone by a woman had done beautiful loving deeds there, rescuing those who were ready to perish.

CHAPTER LXIX.

HOMEWARD.

In those silent wintry hours when Romola lay resting from her weariness, her mind, travelling back over the past, and gazing across the undefined distance of the future, saw all objects from a new position. Her experience since the moment of her waking in the boat had come to her with as strong an effect as that of the fresh seal on the dissolving wax. She had felt herself without bonds, without motive; sinking in mere egoistic complaining that life could bring her no content; feeling a

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right to say, "I am tired of life; I want to die." That thought had sobbed within her as she fell asleep, but from the moment after her waking when the cry had drawn her, she had not even reflected, as she used to do in Florence, that she was glad to live because she could lighten sorrow—she had simply lived, with so energetic an impulse to share the life around her, to answer the call of need and do the work which cried aloud to be done, that the reasons for living, enduring, labouring, never took the form of argument.

The experience was like a new baptism to Romola. In Florence the simpler relations of the human being to his fellow-men had been complicated for her with all the special ties of marriage, the State, and religious discipleship, and when these had disappointed her trust the shock seemed to have shaken her aloof from life and stunned her sympathy. But now she said, "It was mere baseness in me to desire death. If everything else is doubtful, this suffering that I can help is certain; if the glory of the cross is an illusion, the sorrow is only the truer. While the strength is in my arm I will stretch it out to the fainting; while the light visits my eyes they shall seek the forsaken."

And then the past arose with a fresh appeal to her. Her work in this green valley was done, and the emotions that were disengaged from the people immediately around her rushed back into the old deep channels of use and affection. That rare possibility of self-contemplation which comes in any complete severance from our wonted life made her judge herself as she had never done before: the compunction which is inseparable from a sympathetic nature keenly alive to the possible experience of others, began to stir in her with growing force. She questioned the justness of her own conclusions, of her own deeds: she had been rash, arrogant, always dissatisfied that others were not good enough, while she herself had not been true to what her soul had once recognized as the best. She began to condemn her flight: after all, it had been cowardly self-care; the grounds on which Savonarola had once taken her back were truer, deeper than the grounds she had had for her second flight. How could she feel the needs of others and not feel above all the needs of the nearest?

But then came reaction against such self-reproach. The memory of her life with Tito, of the conditions which made their real union impossible, while their external union imposed a set of false duties on her which were essentially the concealment and sanctioning of what her mind revolted from, told her that flight had been her only resource. All minds, except such as are delivered from doubt by dulness of sensibility, must be subject to this recurring conflict where the many-twisted conditions of life have forbidden the fulfilment of a bond. For in strictness there is no replacing of relations: the presence of the new does not nullify the failure and breach of the old. Life has lost its perfection: it has been maimed; and until the wounds are quite scarred, conscience continually casts backward doubting glances.

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Romola shrank with dread from the renewal of her proximity to Tito, and yet she was uneasy that she had put herself out of reach of knowing what was his fate—uneasy that the moment might yet come when he would be in misery and need her. There was still a thread of pain within her, testifying to those words of Fra Girolamo, that she could not cease to be a wife. Could anything utterly cease for her that had once mingled itself with the current of her heart's blood?

Florence, and all her life there, had come back to her like hunger; her feelings could not go wandering after the possible and the vague: their living fibre was fed with the memory of familiar things. And the thought that she had divided herself from them for ever became more and more importunate in these hours that were unfilled with action. What if Fra Girolamo had been wrong? What if the life of Florence was a web of inconsistencies? Was she, then, something higher, that she should shake the dust from off her feet, and say, "This world is not good enough for me?" If she had been really higher, she would not so easily have lost all her trust.

Her indignant grief for her godfather had no longer complete possession of her, and her sense of debt to Savonarola was recovering predominance. Nothing that had come, or was to come, could do away with the fact that there had been a great inspiration in him which had waked a new life in her. Who, in all her experience, could demand the same gratitude from her as he? His errors—might they not bring calamities?

She could not rest. She hardly knew whether it was her strength returning with the budding leaves that made her active again, or whether it was her eager longing to get nearer Florence. She did not imagine herself daring to enter Florence, but the desire to be near enough to learn what was happening there urged itself with a strength that excluded all other purposes.

And one March morning the people in the valley were gathered together to see the blessed Lady depart. Jacopo had fetched a mule for her, and was going with her over the mountains. The Padre, too, was going with her to the nearest town, that he might help her in learning the safest way by which she might get to Pistoja. Her store of trinkets and money, untouched in this valley, was abundant for her needs.

If Romola had been less drawn by the longing that was taking her away, it would have been a hard moment for her when she walked along the village street for the last time, while the Padre and Jacopo, with the mule, were awaiting her near the well. Her steps were hindered by the wailing people, who knelt and kissed her hands, then clung to her skirts and kissed the grey folds, crying, "Ah, why will you go, when the good season is beginning and the crops will be plentiful? Why will you go?"

"Do not be sorry," said Romola, "you are well now, and I shall remember you. I must go and see if my own people want me."

"Ah, yes, if they have the pestilence!"

"Look at us again, Madonna!"

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"Yes, yes, we will be good to the little Benedetto!"

At last Romola mounted her mule, but a vigorous screaming from Benedetto as he saw her turn from him in this new position, was an excuse for all the people to follow her and insist that he must ride on the mule's neck to the foot of the slope.

The parting must come at last, but as Romola turned continually before she passed out of sight, she saw the little flock lingering to catch the last waving of her hand.

CHAPTER LXX.

MEETING AGAIN.

On the fourteenth of April Romola was once more within the walls of Florence. Unable to rest at Pistoja, where contradictory reports reached her about the Trial by Fire, she had gone on to Prato; and was beginning to think that she should be drawn on to Florence in spite of dread, when she encountered that monk of San Spirito who had been her godfather's confessor. From him she learned the full story of Savonarola's arrest, and of her husband's death. This Augustinian monk had been in the stream of people who had followed the waggon with its awful burden into the Piazza, and he could tell her what was generally known in Florence—that Tito had escaped from an assaulting mob by leaping into the Arno, but had been murdered on the bank by an old man who had long had an enmity against him. But Romola understood the catastrophe as no one else did. Of Savonarola the monk told her, in that tone of unfavourable prejudice which was usual in the Black Brethren (Frati Neri) towards the brother who showed white under his black, that he had confessed himself a deceiver of the people.

Romola paused no longer. That evening she was in Florence, sitting in agitated silence under the exclamations of joy and wailing, mingled with exuberant narrative, which were poured into her ears by Monna Brigida, who had retrograded to false hair in Romola's absence, but now drew it off again and declared she would not mind being grey, if her dear child would stay with her.

Romola was too deeply moved by the main events which she had known before coming to Florence, to be wrought upon by the doubtful gossiping details added in Brigida's narrative. The tragedy of her husband's death, of Fra Girolamo's confession of duplicity under the coercion of torture, left her hardly any power of apprehending minor circumstances. All the mental activity she could exert under that load of awe-stricken grief, was absorbed by two purposes which must supersede every other; to try and see Savonarola, and to learn what had become of Tessa and the children.

"Tell me, cousin," she said abruptly, when Monna Brigida's tongue

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had run quite away from troubles into projects of Romola's living with her, "has anything been seen or said since Tito's death of a young woman with two little children?"

Brigida started, rounded her eyes, and lifted up her hands.

"Cristo! no. What! was he so bad as that, my poor child? Ah, then, that was why you went away and left me word only that you went of your own free will. Well, well, if I'd known that, I shouldn't have thought you so strange and flighty. For I did say to myself, though I didn't tell anybody else, 'What was she to go away from her husband for, leaving him to mischief, only because they cut poor Bernardo's head off? She's got her father's temper,' I said, 'that's what it is.' Well, well, never scold me, child: Bardo *was* fierce, you can't deny it. But if you had only told me the truth, that there was a young hussey and children, I should have understood it all. Anything seen or said of her? No; and the less the better. They say enough of ill about him without that. But since that was the reason you went——"

"No, dear cousin," said Romola, interrupting her earnestly, "pray do not talk so. I wish above all things to find that young woman and her children, and to take care of them. They are quite helpless. Say nothing against it; that is the thing I shall do first of all."

"Well," said Monna Brigida, shrugging her shoulders and lowering her voice with an air of puzzled discomfiture, "if that's being a Piagnone, I've been taking peas for paternosters. Why, Fra Girolamo said as good as that widows ought not to marry again. Step in at the door and it's a sin and a shame, it seems; but come down the chimney and you're welcome. *Two* children—Santiddio!"

"Cousin, the poor thing has done no conscious wrong: she is ignorant of everything. I will tell you—but not now."

Early the next morning Romola's steps were directed to the house beyond San Ambrogio where she had once found Tessa; but it was as she had feared: Tessa was gone. Romola conjectured that Tito had sent her away beforehand to some spot where he had intended to join her, for she did not believe that he would willingly part with those children. It was a painful conjecture, because, if Tessa were out of Florence, there was hardly a chance of finding her, and Romola pictured the childish creature waiting and waiting at some wayside spot in wondering helpless misery. Those who lived near could tell her nothing except that old deaf Lisa had gone away a week ago with her goods, but no one knew where Tessa had gone. Romola saw no further active search open to her; for she had no knowledge that could serve as a starting-point for inquiry, and not only her innate reserve but a more noble sensitiveness made her shrink from assuming an attitude of generosity in the eyes of others by publishing Tessa's relation to Tito along with her own desire to find her. Many days passed in anxious inaction. Even under strong solicitation from other thoughts Romola found her heart palpitating if she caught sight of a pair of round brown legs, or of a short woman in the contadina dress.

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She never for a moment told herself that it was heroism or exalted charity in her to seek these beings; she needed something that she was bound specially to care for; she yearned to clasp the children and to make them love her. This at least would be some sweet result, for others as well as herself, from all her past sorrow. It appeared there was much property of Tito's to which she had a claim; but she distrusted the cleanness of that money, and she had determined to make it all over to the State, except so much as was equal to the price of her father's library. This would be enough for the modest support of Tessa and the children. But Monna Brigida threw such planning into the background by clamorously insisting that Romola must live with her and never forsake her till she had seen her safe in paradise—else why had she persuaded her to turn Piagnone?—and if Romola wanted to rear other people's children, she, Monna Brigida, must rear them too. Only they must be found first.

Romola felt the full force of that innuendo. But strong feeling unsatisfied is never without its superstition, either of hope or despair. Romola's was the superstition of hope: *somehow* she was to find that mother and the children. And at last another direction for active inquiry suggested itself. She learned that Tito had provided horses and mules to await him in San Gallo; he was therefore going to leave Florence by the gate of San Gallo, and she determined, though without much confidence in the issue, to try and ascertain from the gate-keepers if they had observed any one corresponding to the description of Tessa, with her children, to have passed the gates before the morning of the ninth of April. Walking along the Via San Gallo, and looking watchfully about her through her long widow's veil, lest she should miss any object that might aid her, she descried Bratti chaffering with a customer. That roaming man, she thought, might aid her: she would not mind talking of Tessa to *him*. But as she put aside her veil and crossed the street towards him, she saw something hanging from the corner of his basket which made her heart leap with a much stronger hope.

"Bratti, my friend," she said abruptly, "where did you get that necklace?"

"Your servant, madonna," said Bratti, looking round at her very deliberately, his mind not being subject to surprise. "It's a necklace worth money, but I shall get little by it, for my heart's too tender for a trader's; I've promised to keep it in pledge."

"Pray tell me where you got it:—from a little woman named Tessa, is it not true?"

"Ah! if you know her," said Bratti, "and would redeem it of me at a small profit, and give it her again, you'd be doing a charity, for she cried at parting with it—you'd have thought she was running into a brook. It's a small profit I'll charge you. You shall have it for a florin, for I don't like to be hard-hearted."

"Where is she?" said Romola, giving him the money, and unclasping the necklace from the basket in joyful agitation.

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"Outside the gate there, at the other end of the Borgo, at old Sibilla Manetti's: anybody will tell you which is the house."

Romola went along with winged feet, blessing that incident of the Carnival which had made her learn by heart the appearance of this necklace. Soon she was at the house she sought. The young woman and the children were in the inner room—were to have been fetched away a fortnight ago and more—had no money, only their clothes, to pay a poor widow with for their food and lodging. But since Madonna knew them——Romola waited to hear no more, but opened the door.

Tessa was seated on the low bed: her crying had passed into tearless sobs, and she was looking with sad blank eyes at the two children, who were playing in an opposite corner—Lillo covering his head with his skirt and roaring at Ninna to frighten her, then peeping out again to see how she bore it. The door was a little behind Tessa, and she did not turn round when it opened, thinking it was only the old woman: expectation was no longer alive. Romola had thrown aside her veil and paused a moment, holding the necklace in sight. Then she said, in that pure voice that used to cheer her father,—

"Tessa!"

Tessa started to her feet and looked round.

"See," said Romola, clasping the beads on Tessa's neck, "God has sent me to you again."

The poor thing screamed and sobbed, and clung to the arms that fastened the necklace. She could not speak. The two children came from their corner, laid hold of their mother's skirts, and looked up with wide eyes at Romola.

That day they all went home to Monna Brigida's, in the Borgo degli Albizzi. Romola had made known to Tessa by gentle degrees, that Naldo could never come to her again; not because he was cruel, but because he was dead.

"But be comforted, my Tessa," said Romola. "I am come to take care of you always. And we have got Lillo and Ninna."

Monna Brigida's mouth twitched in the struggle between her awe of Romola and the desire to speak unseasonably.

"Let be, for the present," she thought; "but it seems to me a thousand years till I tell this little contadina, who seems not to know how many fingers she's got on her hand, who Romola is. And I *will* tell her some day, else she'll never know her place. It's all very well for Romola; nobody will call their souls their own when she's by; but if I'm to have this puss-faced minx living in my house, she must be humble to me."

However, Monna Brigida wanted to give the children too many sweets for their supper, and confessed to Romola, the last thing before going to bed, that it would be a shame not to take care of such cherubs.

"But you must give up to me a little, Romola, about their eating, and those things. For you have never had a baby, and I had twins, only they died as soon as they were born."

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CHAPTER LXXI.

THE CONFESSION.

WHEN Romola brought home Tessa and the children April was already near its close, and the other great anxiety on her mind had been wrought to its highest pitch by the publication in print of Fra Girolamo's Trial, or rather of the confessions drawn from him by the sixteen Florentine citizens commissioned to interrogate him. The appearance of this document, issued by order of the Signoria, had called forth such strong expressions of public suspicion and discontent, that severe measures were immediately taken for recalling it. Of course there were copies accidentally mislaid, and a second edition, *not* by order of the Signoria, was soon in the hands of eager readers.

Romola, who began to despair of ever speaking with Fra Girolamo, read this evidence again and again, desiring to judge it by some clearer light than the contradictory impressions that were taking the form of assertions in the mouths of both partisans and enemies.

In the more devout followers of Savonarola his want of constancy under torture, and his retractation of prophetic claims, had produced a consternation too profound to be at once displaced as it ultimately was by the suspicion, which soon grew into a positive datum, that any reported words of his which were in inexplicable contradiction to their faith in him, had not come from the lips of the prophet, but from the falsifying pen of Ser Ceccone, that notary of evil repute, who had made the digest of the examination. But there were obvious facts that at once threw discredit on the printed document. Was not the list of sixteen examiners half made up of the prophet's bitterest enemies? Was not the notorious Dolfo Spini one of the new Eight prematurely elected, in order to load the dice against a man whose ruin had been determined on by the party in power? It was but a murder with slow formalities that was being transacted in the Old Palace. The Signoria had resolved to drive a good bargain with the Pope and the Duke of Milan, by extinguishing the man who was as great a molestation to vicious citizens and greedy foreign tyrants as to a corrupt clergy. The Frate had been doomed beforehand, and the only question that was pretended to exist now was, whether the Republic, in return for a permission to lay a tax on ecclesiastical property, should deliver him alive into the hands of the Pope, or whether the Pope should further concede to the Republic what its dignity demanded—the privilege of hanging and burning its own prophet on its own piazza.

Who, under such circumstances, would give full credit to this so-called confession? If the Frate had denied his prophetic gift, the denial had only been wrenched from him by the agony of torture—agony that, in his sensitive frame, must quickly produce raving. What if these

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wicked examiners declared that he had only had the torture of the rope and pulley thrice, and only on one day, and that his confessions had been made when he was under no bodily coercion—was that to be believed? He had been tortured much more; he had been tortured in proportion to the distress his confessions had created in the hearts of those who loved him.

Other friends of Savonarola, who were less ardent partisans, did not doubt the substantial genuineness of the confession, however it might have been coloured by the transpositions and additions of the notary; but they argued indignantly that there was nothing which could warrant a condemnation to death, or even to grave punishment. It must be clear to all impartial men that if this examination represented the only evidence against the Frate, he would die, not for any crime, but because he had made himself inconvenient to the Pope, to the rapacious Italian States that wanted to dismember their Tuscan neighbour, and to those unworthy citizens who sought to gratify their private ambition in opposition to the common weal.

Not a shadow of political crime had been proved against him. Not one stain had been detected on his private conduct: his fellow monks, including one who had formerly been his secretary for several years, and who, with more than the average culture of his companions, had a disposition to criticize Fra Girolamo's rule as Prior, bore testimony, even after the shock of his retractation, to an unimpeachable purity and consistency in his life, which had commanded their unsuspecting veneration. The Pope himself had not been able to raise a charge of heresy against the Frate, except on the ground of disobedience to a mandate, and disregard of the sentence of excommunication. It was difficult to justify that breach of discipline by argument, but there was a moral insurgence in the minds of grave men against the Court of Rome, which tended to confound the theoretic distinction between the Church and churchmen, and to lighten the scandal of disobedience.

Men of ordinary morality and public spirit felt that the triumph of the Frate's enemies was really the triumph of gross licence. And keen Florentines like Soderini and Piero Guicciardini may well have had an angry smile on their lips at a severity which dispensed with all law in order to hang and burn a man in whom the seductions of a public career had warped the strictness of his veracity; may well have remarked that if the Frate had mixed a much deeper fraud with a zeal and ability less inconvenient to high personages, the fraud would have been regarded as an excellent oil for ecclesiastical and political wheels.

Nevertheless such shrewd men were forced to admit that, however poor a figure the Florentine government made in its clumsy pretence of a judicial warrant for what had in fact been predetermined as an act of policy, the measures of the Pope against Savonarola were necessary measures of self-defence. Not to try and rid himself of a man who wanted to stir up the Powers of Europe to summon a General Council

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and depose him, would have been adding ineptitude to iniquity. There was no denying that towards Alexander the Sixth Savonarola was a rebel, and what was much more, a dangerous rebel. Florence had heard him say, and had well understood what he meant, that he would not *obey the devil.* It was inevitably a life and death struggle between the Frate and the Pope; but it was less inevitable that Florence should make itself the Pope's executioner.

Romola's ears were filled in this way with the suggestions of a faith still ardent under its wounds, and the suggestions of worldly discernment, judging things according to a very moderate standard of what is possible to human nature. She could be satisfied with neither. She brought to her long meditations over that printed document many painful observations, registered more or less consciously through the years of her discipleship, which whispered a presentiment that Savonarola's retractation of his prophetic claims was not merely a spasmodic effort to escape from torture. But, on the other hand, her soul cried out for some explanation of his lapses which would make it still possible for her to believe that the main striving of his life had been pure and grand. The recent memory of the selfish discontent which had come over her like a blighting wind along with the loss of her trust in the man who had been for her an incarnation of the highest motives, had produced a reaction which is known to many as a sort of faith that has sprung up to them out of the very depths of their despair. It was impossible, she said now, that the negative disbelieving thoughts which had made her soul arid of all good, could be founded in the truth of things: impossible that it had not been a living spirit, and no hollow pretence, which had once breathed in the Frate's words, and kindled a new life in her. Whatever falsehood there had been in him, had been a fall and not a purpose; a gradual entanglement in which he struggled, not a contrivance encouraged by success.

Looking at the printed confessions she saw many sentences which bore the stamp of bungling fabrication: they had that emphasis and repetition in self-accusation which none but very low hypocrites use to their fellow-men. But the fact that these sentences were in striking opposition, not only to the character of Savonarola, but also to the general tone of the confessions, strengthened the impression that the rest of the text represented in the main what had really fallen from his lips. Hardly a word was dishonourable to him except what turned on his prophetic annunciations. He was unvarying in his statement of the ends he had pursued for Florence, the church, and the world; and, apart from the mixture of falsity in that claim to special inspiration by which he sought to gain hold of men's minds, there was no admission of having used unworthy means. Even in this confession, and without expurgation of the notary's malign phrases, Fra Girolamo shone forth as a man who had sought his own glory indeed, but sought it by labouring for the very highest end—the moral welfare of men—not by vague exhortations, but by striving to turn beliefs into energies that would work in all the details of life.

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"Everything that I have done," said one memorable passage, which may perhaps have had its erasures and interpolations, "I have done with the design of being for ever famous, in the present and in future ages; and that I might win credit in Florence; and that nothing of great import should be done without my sanction. And when I had thus established my position in Florence, I had it in my mind to do great things in Italy and beyond Italy, by means of those chief personages with whom I had contracted friendship and consulted on high matters, such as this of the General Council. And in proportion as my first efforts succeeded, I should have adopted further measures. Above all, when the General Council had once been brought about, I intended to rouse the princes of Christendom, and especially those beyond the borders of Italy, to subdue the infidels. It was not much in my thoughts to get myself made a Cardinal or Pope; for when I should have achieved the work I had in view, I should, without being Pope, have been the first man in the world in the authority I should have possessed, and the reverence that would have been paid me. If I had been made Pope, I would not have refused the office: but it seemed to me that to be the head of that work was a greater thing than to be Pope; because a man without virtue may be Pope, but *such a work as I contemplated demanded a man of excellent virtues.*"

That blending of ambition with belief in the supremacy of goodness made no new tone to Romola, who had been used to hear it in the voice that rang through the Duomo. It was the habit of Savonarola's mind to conceive great things, and to feel that he was the man to do them. Iniquity should be brought low; the cause of justice, purity, and love should triumph; and it should triumph by his voice, by his work, by his blood. In moments of ecstatic contemplation, doubtless, the sense of self melted in the sense of the unspeakable, and in that part of his experience lay the elements of genuine self-abasement; but in the presence of his fellow-men for whom he was to act, pre-eminence seemed a necessary condition of his life.

And perhaps this confession, even when it described a doubleness that was conscious and deliberate, really implied no more than that wavering of belief concerning his own impressions and motives which most human beings who have not a stupid inflexibility of self-confidence must be liable to under a marked change of external conditions? In a life where the experience was so tumultuously mixed as it must have been in the Frate's, what a possibility was opened for a change of self-judgment, when, instead of eyes that venerated and knees that knelt, instead of a great work on its way to accomplishment, and in its prosperity stamping the agent as a chosen instrument, there came the hooting and the spitting and the curses of the crowd; and then the hard faces of enemies made judges; and then the horrible torture, and with the torture the irrepressible cry, "It is true, what you would have me say: let me go, do not torture me again: yes, yes, I am guilty. O God! Thy stroke has reached me!"

As Romola thought of the anguish that must have followed the con-

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fession—whether, in the subsequent solitude of the prison, conscience retracted or confirmed the self-taxing words—that anguish seemed to be pressing on her own heart and urging the slow bitter tears. Every vulgar self-ignorant person in Florence was glibly pronouncing on this man's demerits, and he was knowing a depth of sorrow which can only be known to the soul that has loved and sought the most perfect thing, and beholds itself fallen.

She had not then seen—what she saw afterwards—the evidence of the Frate's mental state after he had had thus to lay his mouth in the dust. As the days went by, the reports of new unpublished examinations, eliciting no change of confessions, ceased; Savonarola was left alone in his prison and allowed pen and ink for a while, that, if he liked, he might use his poor bruised and strained right arm to write with. He wrote; but what he wrote was no vindication of his innocence, no protest against the proceedings used towards him: it was a continued colloquy with that Divine purity with which he sought complete reunion; it was the outpouring of self-abasement; it was one long cry for inward renovation. No lingering echoes of the old vehement self-assertion, "Look at my work, for it is good, and those who set their faces against it are the children of the devil!" The voice of Sadness tells him, "God placed thee in the midst of the people even as if thou hadst been one of the excellent. In this way thou hast taught others, and hast failed to learn thyself. Thou hast cured others: and thou thyself hast been still diseased. Thy heart was lifted up at the beauty of thy own deeds, and through this thou hast lost thy wisdom and art become, and shalt be to all eternity, nothing. . . . After so many benefits with which God has honoured thee, thou art fallen into the depths of the sea; and after so many gifts bestowed on thee, thou, by thy pride and vain-glory, hast scandalized all the world." And when Hope speaks and argues that the Divine love has not forsaken him, it says nothing now of a great work to be done, but only says, "Thou art not forsaken, else why is thy heart bowed in penitence? That, too, is a gift."

There is no jot of worthy evidence that from the time of his imprisonment to the supreme moment, Savonarola thought or spoke of himself as a martyr. The idea of martyrdom had been to him a passion dividing the dream of the future with the triumph of beholding his work achieved. And now, in place of both, had come a resignation which he called by no glorifying name.

But therefore he may the more fitly be called a martyr by his fellow-men to all time. For power rose against him not because of his sins, but because of his greatness—not because he sought to deceive the world, but because he sought to make it noble. And through that greatness of his he endured a double agony: not only the reviling, and the torture, and the death-throe, but the agony of sinking from the vision of glorious achievement into that deep shadow where he could only say, "I count as nothing: darkness encompasses me: yet the light I saw was the true light."

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CHAPTER LXXII.

The Last Silence.

Romola had seemed to hear, as if they had been a cry, the words repeated to her by many lips—the words uttered by Savonarola when he took leave of those Brethren of San Marco who had come to witness his signature of the confession: "Pray for me, for God has withdrawn from me the spirit of prophecy."

Those words had shaken her with new doubts as to the mode in which he looked back at the past in moments of complete self-possession. And the doubts were strengthened by more piteous things still, which soon reached her ears.

The nineteenth of May had come, and by that day's sunshine there had entered into Florence the two Papal Commissaries, charged with the completion of Savonarola's trial. They entered amid the acclamations of the people, calling for the death of the Frate. For now the popular cry was, "It is the Frate's deception that has brought on all our misfortunes; let him be burned, and all things right will be done, and our evils will cease."

The next day it is well certified that there was fresh and fresh torture of the shattered sensitive frame; and now, at the first threat and first sight of the horrible implements, Savonarola, in convulsed agitation, fell on his knees, and in brief, passionate words, *retracted his confession*, declared that he had spoken falsely in denying his prophetic gift, and that if he suffered, he would suffer for the truth—"The things that I have spoken, I had them from God."

But not the less the torture was laid upon him, and when he was under it he was asked why he had uttered those retracting words. Men were not demons in those days, and yet nothing but confessions of guilt were held a reason for release from torture. The answer came: "I said it that I might seem good; tear me no more, I will tell you the truth."

There were Florentine assessors at this new trial, and those words of twofold retractation had soon spread. They filled Romola with dismayed uncertainty.

"But"—it flashed across her—"there will come a moment when he may speak. When there is no dread hanging over him but the dread of falsehood, when they have brought him into the presence of death, when he is lifted above the people, and looks on them for the last time, they cannot hinder him from speaking a last decisive word. I will be there."

Three days after, on the 23rd of May, 1498, there was again a long narrow platform stretching across the great piazza, from the Palazzo Vecchio towards the Tetta de' Pisani. But there was no grove of fuel as before: instead of that, there was one great heap of fuel placed on the

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circular area which made the termination of the long narrow platform. And above this heap of fuel rose a gibbet with three halters on it; a gibbet which, having two arms, still looked so much like a cross as to make some beholders uncomfortable, though one arm had been truncated to avoid the resemblance.

On the marble terrace of the Palazzo were three tribunals; one near the door for the Bishop, who was to perform the ceremony of degradation on Fra Girolamo and the two Brethren who were to suffer as his followers and accomplices; another for the Papal Commissaries, who were to pronounce them heretics and schismatics, and deliver them over to the secular arm; and a third, close to Marzocco, at the corner of the terrace where the platform began, for the Gonfaloniere, and the Eight who were to pronounce the sentence of death.

Again the piazza was thronged with expectant faces: again there was to be a great fire kindled. In the majority of the crowd that pressed around the gibbet the expectation was that of ferocious hatred, or of mere hard curiosity to behold a barbarous sight. But there were still many spectators on the wide pavement, on the roofs, and at the windows, who, in the midst of their bitter grief and their own endurance of insult as hypocritical Piagnoni, were not without a lingering hope, even at this eleventh hour, that God would interpose, by some sign, to manifest their beloved prophet as His servant. And there were yet more who looked forward with trembling eagerness, as Romola did, to that final moment when Savonarola might say, "O people, I was innocent of deceit."

Romola was at a window on the north side of the piazza, far away from the marble terrace where the tribunals stood; and near her, also looking on in painful doubt concerning the man who had won his early reverence, was a young Florentine of two-and-twenty, named Jacopo Nardi, afterwards to deserve honour as one of the very few who, feeling Fra Girolamo's eminence, have written about him with the simple desire to be veracious. He had said to Romola, with respectful gentleness, when he saw the struggle in her between her shuddering horror of the scene and her yearning to witness what might happen in the last moment,

"Madonna, there is no need for you to look at these cruel things. I will tell you when he comes out of the Palazzo. Trust to me; I know what you would see."

Romola covered her face, but the hootings that seemed to make the hideous scene still visible could not be shut out. At last her arm was touched, and she heard the words, "He comes." She looked towards the Palace, and could see Savonarola led out in his Dominican garb; could see him standing before the Bishop, and being stripped of the black mantle, the white scapulary, and long white tunic, till he stood in a close woollen under-tunic, that told of no sacred office, no rank. He had been degraded, and cut off from the Church Militant.

The baser part of the multitude delight in degradations, apart from any hatred; it is the satire they best understand. There was a fresh hoot

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of triumph as the three degraded Brethren passed on to the tribunal of the Papal Commissaries, who were to pronounce them schismatics and heretics. Did not the prophet look like a schismatic and heretic now? It is easy to believe in the damnable state of a man who stands stripped and degraded.

Then the third tribunal was passed—that of the Florentine officials who were to pronounce sentence, and amongst whom, even at her distance, Romola could discern the odious figure of Dolfo Spini, indued in the grave black lucco, as one of the Eight.

Then the three figures, in their close white raiment, trod their way along the platform, amidst yells and grating tones of insult.

"Cover your eyes, madonna," said Jacopo Nardi; "Fra Girolamo will be the last."

It was not long before she had to uncover them again. Savonarola was there. He was not far off her now. He had mounted the steps; she could see him look round on the multitude.

But in the same moment expectation died, and she only saw what he was seeing—torches waving to kindle the fuel beneath his dead body, faces glaring with a yet worse light; she only heard what *he* was hearing—gross jests, taunts, and curses.

The moment was past. Her face was covered again, and she only knew that Savonarola's voice had passed into eternal silence.

EPILOGUE.

On the evening of the twenty-second of May, 1509, five persons, of whose history we have known something, were seated in a handsome upper room opening on to a loggia which, at its right-hand corner, looked all along the Borgo Pinti, and over the city gate towards Fiesole, and the solemn heights beyond it.

At one end of the room was an archway opening into a narrow inner room, hardly more than a recess, where the light fell from above on a small altar covered with fair white linen. Over the altar was a picture, discernible at the distance where the little party sat only as the small full-length portrait of a Dominican Brother. For it was shaded from the light above by overhanging branches and wreaths of flowers, and the fresh tapers below it were unlit. But it seemed that the decoration of the altar and its recess was not complete. For part of the floor was strewn with a confusion of flowers and green boughs, and among them sat a delicate blue-eyed girl of thirteen, tossing her long light-brown hair out of her eyes, as she made selections for the wreaths she was weaving,

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or looked up at her mother's work in the same kind, and told her how to do it with a little air of instruction.

For that mother was not very clever at weaving flowers or at any other work. Tessa's fingers had not become more adroit with the years —only very much fatter. She got on slowly and turned her head about a good deal, and asked Ninna's opinion with much deference; for Tessa never ceased to be astonished at the wisdom of her children. She still wore her contadina gown: it was only broader than the old one; and there was the silver pin in her rough curly brown hair, and round her neck the memorable necklace, with a red cord under it, that ended mysteriously in her bosom. Her rounded face wore even a more perfect look of childish content than in her younger days: everybody was so good in the world, Tessa thought; even Monna Brigida never found fault with her now, and did little else than sleep, which was an amiable practice in everybody, and one that Tessa liked for herself.

Monna Brigida was asleep at this moment, in a straight-backed arm-chair, a couple of yards off. Her hair, parting backward under her black hood, had that soft whiteness which is not like snow or anything else, but is simply the lovely whiteness of aged hair. Her chin had sunk on her bosom, and her hands rested on the elbow of her chair. She had not been weaving flowers or doing anything else: she had only been looking on as usual, and as usual had fallen asleep.

The other two figures were seated farther off, at the wide doorway that opened on to the loggia. Lillo sat on the ground with his back against the angle of the door-post, and his long legs stretched out, while he held a large book open on his knee and occasionally made a dash with his hand at an inquisitive fly, with an air of interest stronger than that excited by the finely-printed copy of Petrarch which he kept open at one place, as if he were learning something by heart.

Romola sat nearly opposite Lillo, but she was not observing him. Her hands were crossed on her lap and her eyes were fixed absently on the distant mountains: she was evidently unconscious of anything around her. An eager life had left its marks upon her: the finely moulded cheek had sunk a little, the golden crown was less massive; but there was a placidity in Romola's face which had never belonged to it in youth. It is but once that we can know our worst sorrows, and Romola had known them while life was new.

Absorbed in this way, she was not at first aware that Lillo had ceased to look at his book, and was watching her with a slightly impatient air, which meant that he wanted to talk to her, but was not quite sure whether she would like that entertainment just now. But persevering looks make themselves felt at last. Romola did presently turn away her eyes from the distance and meet Lillo's impatient dark gaze with a brighter and brighter smile. He shuffled along the floor, still keeping the book on his lap, till he got close to her and lodged his chin on her knee.

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"What is it, Lillo?" said Romola, pulling his hair back from his brow. Lillo was a handsome lad, but his features were turning out to be more massive and less regular than his father's. The blood of the Tuscan peasant was in his veins.

"Mamma Romola, what am I to be?" he said, well contented that there was a prospect of talking till it would be too late to con "Spirto gentil" any longer.

"What should you like to be, Lillo? You might be a scholar. My father was a scholar, you know, and taught me a great deal. That is the reason why I can teach you."

"Yes," said Lillo, rather hesitatingly. "But he is old and blind in the picture. Did he get a great deal of glory?"

"Not much, Lillo. The world was not always very kind to him, and he saw meaner men than himself put into higher places, because they could flatter and say what was false. And then his dear son thought it right to leave him and become a monk; and after that, my father being blind and lonely, felt unable to do the things that would have made his learning of greater use to men, so that he might still have lived in his works after he was in his grave."

"I should not like that sort of life," said Lillo. "I should like to be something that would make me a great man, and very happy besides —something that would not hinder me from having a good deal of pleasure."

"That is not easy, my Lillo. It is only a poor sort of happiness that could ever come by caring very much about our own narrow pleasures. We can only have the highest happiness, such as goes along with being a great man, by having wide thoughts, and much feeling for the rest of the world, as well as ourselves; and this sort of happiness often brings so much pain with it, that we can only tell it from pain by its being what we would choose before everything else, because our souls see it is good. There are so many things wrong and difficult in the world, that no man can be great—he can hardly keep himself from wickedness—unless he gives up thinking much about pleasures or rewards, and gets strength to endure what is hard and painful. My father had the greatness that belongs to integrity; he chose poverty and obscurity rather than falsehood. And there was Fra Girolamo—you know why I keep to-morrow sacred: *he* had the greatness which belongs to a life spent in struggling against powerful wrong, and in trying to raise men to the highest deeds they are capable of. And so, my Lillo, if you mean to act nobly and seek to know the best things God has put within reach of men, you must learn to fix your mind on that end, and not on what will happen to you because of it. And remember, if you were to choose something lower, and make it the rule of your life to seek your own pleasure and escape from what is disagreeable, calamity might come just the same; and it would be calamity falling on a base mind, which is the one form of sorrow that has no balm in it, and that may well make a

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man say,—'It would have been better for me if I had never been born.' I will tell you something, Lillo."

Romola paused a moment. She had taken Lillo's cheeks between her hands, and his young eyes were meeting hers.

"There was a man to whom I was very near, so that I could see a great deal of his life, who made almost every one fond of him, for he was young, and clever, and beautiful, and his manners to all were gentle and kind. I believe, when I first knew him, he never thought of doing anything cruel or base. But because he tried to slip away from everything that was unpleasant, and cared for nothing else so much as his own safety, he came at last to commit some of the basest deeds—such as make men infamous. He denied his father, and left him to misery; he betrayed every trust that was reposed in him, that he might keep himself safe and get rich and prosperous. Yet calamity overtook him."

Again Romola paused. Her voice was unsteady, and Lillo was looking up at her with awed wonder.

"Another time, my Lillo—I will tell you another time. See, there are our old Piero di Cosimo and Nello coming up the Borgo Pinti, bringing us their flowers. Let us go and wave our hands to them, that they may know we see them."

"How queer old Piero is," said Lillo, as they stood at the corner of the loggia, watching the advancing figures. "He abuses you for dressing the altar, and thinking so much of Fra Girolamo, and yet he brings you the flowers."

"Never mind," said Romola. "There are many good people who did not love Fra Girolamo. Perhaps I should never have learned to love him if he had not helped me when I was in great need."

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Medical Etiquette.

In a recent article some remarks were made upon those peculiar, unwritten laws which govern the three learned professions, and which make them objects partly of mystery and partly, it must be confessed, of jealous dislike to the general public. It was, however, only with regard to the legal profession that the subject was treated with any particularity. At present, we intend to discuss, as briefly as possible, what we venture to say are at least as interesting—the principles of etiquette which are tacitly adopted by the members of the medical profession.

It seems necessary to inquire a little, in the first place, into the special character of that *esprit de corps* which unites medical men in the observance of certain ethical traditions, for special it certainly is, and perfectly distinct from the analogous feeling which animates lawyers and divines. The truth is, that this feeling depends ultimately upon the functions which the medical body has to perform, and these are highly peculiar. The grand distinctive feature of medicine is that it is at once an inexact science and one which is absolutely necessary to the wants of humanity. There are no general laws of healing established from which the physician can, in the calm retirement of his study, deduce particular rules of practice for all possible occasions; but the pressing needs of suffering men and women cry loudly for help; and to meet these urgent claims upon them medical men are forced to apply, as best they may, systems of treatment which often rest upon inductions which they well know are neither as numerous nor as carefully made as they should be. The common sneer at the "uncertainties of medicine" is easy; but we think that a more useful purpose might be served by inquiring whether those very rules of medical etiquette, which to the public sometimes seem like the grotesque trappings of professional conceit and egotism, be not, in fact, our best preservatives against the evils which such uncertainties might give rise to. We think that it will not be difficult to show that this is really the case.

Medical men are, necessarily, the dispensers of an *empirical science.* It is necessary to explain the sense in which we use this term, and we cannot do so better than in the words of a most eloquent living physician —M. Trousseau. "Empiricism," says M. Trousseau, "means *experiment*, and nothing more nor less. . . . . Experimentation, independent of all theory, is thus completely opposed to that which we call *dogmatism*, which proceeds, it is true, on a basis of facts furnished by empiric observation, but which systematizes completely and roundly, leaving no vacant spaces. The theorists who approve neither of empiricism, nor of the empirics or their proceedings, have attempted to pour blame and ridicule upon them, and (perverting the word from its proper meaning)

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have applied the name empiricism to the medicine of haphazard, of secrets, and of formulas; to the medical practice of housewives, of nurses, and of quacks." M. Trousseau proceeds to show how improper and unjust is this latter application of the word empiricism, which ought, in fact, to be used only to express *art* as opposed to *science*.

It is obvious that medicine, being thus an art, rather than a deductive science, demands, in those who practise it, an unusual amount of some rather uncommon virtues. The magnitude of the issues at stake, the enormous temptations to seek short paths to success and to forsake the cautious method of induction which has alone enabled empiricism to accomplish any good thing, and the unparalleled facilities for deceiving either the patient, or themselves, or both: all these point to the necessity of a courageous and clear-sighted honesty in medical men, which is not too common in any class of society: a necessity, in fact, for incessant watchfulness against temptations to egotism, which would lead the physician to credit his own experiments too readily with success. Now it is against this very sin of egotism, against this tendency to assert oneself to be something which one is not, that all rules of medical etiquette are practically directed. These rules divide themselves naturally into three groups; for there is the etiquette which governs the relations of doctors with each other, that which governs their conduct to their patients, and, last, but not least in importance, the etiquette which decides the attitude which the profession generally shall assume towards the whole lay public.

The etiquette which rules doctors in their dealings with each other is popularly much misunderstood. It is believed that medical men observe a certain loyalty to each other because they expect that the good offices which they perform for a *confrère* will be repaid by similar services. That such a motive to mutual loyalty does, in a secondary way, influence doctors in their behaviour to each other, there can be no doubt; nevertheless, this is not the true origin of the tendency to support each other which all decent medical men show. The true reason for it is the instinctive consciousness on the doctor's part that he needs all the moral help and sympathy he can get to keep himself true, and honest, and unpretending; without which qualities he knows full well his work will never be satisfactory, nor he himself a happy man. For this reason he refuses steadily, if he be an honourable man, to credit any stories of miscarriage from want of skill on the part of a brother practitioner on anything short of the positive evidence of unprejudiced medical observers, or to allow any weight to the statements of laymen to such effect, unless they are susceptible of this kind of confirmation. The consideration would also force itself on his mind, that by any other course he would expose scientific truth to grave danger, and that he would not improbably be helping to give authority to some false doctrine in science which might one day be used with terrible effect against himself, unless he were willing to consent to be dishonest.

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Let us take another case in which a medical man's sympathy and sense of fairness to a brother practitioner is often put to the test. Nothing is more common, with a certain class of patients, than to change their medical attendants upon the most frivolous pretexts. Other persons (and those the wiser and more thoughtful part of society) are not fond of such changes, and only under the impression of gross mal-praxis on the part of their doctor would they be inclined to dismiss him. However, on serious or trivial grounds, as the case may be, a good many doctors do receive their dismissal, and an equal number are called to fill their vacant posts, and some important questions at once arise as to the way in which the latter ought to conduct themselves. It is by no means an enviable post, that of the last summoned doctor, for the chances are ninety-nine out of a hundred that he will be solicited, more or less directly, to give an unfavourable opinion of the system of his predecessor. Of course in a large number of instances he will feel bound to decline to do this, because he knows that the previous treatment was quite proper; but in a certain number of cases it naturally happens that he considers that the treatment was wrong; nay, he may even believe that the late attendant was criminally neglectful, and did not use the skill and knowledge which he actually possessed. In the first place, however, it may be confidently said that no honourable practitioner would desire to make capital out of the mistakes of a colleague, still less to profit by the injustice of patients towards a former medical adviser. Secondly, supposing that he finds himself so closely interrogated that he has no choice but either to damage the reputation of a *confrère*, to besmirch his own conscience, or to offend a new client by his reticence, the decision, though it may be painful and trying to have to make it, cannot be doubtful to a just man. The last alternative—that of disappointing that appetite for detecting people in mistakes and misdemeanors, which his patient feels—must be faced, and the doctor has the plain duty before him of refusing to answer the questions put to him.

Again: let us take the case of a medical man who is called upon by a patient to pronounce an opinion on the question whether another practitioner has or has not been guilty of neglect amounting to a legal crime? Let us suppose that his internal judgment answers this question in the affirmative; even in this case he would decline to give any answer until he had communicated with the accused person, and heard his version of the matter; and if this should fail to shake the opinion already formed, the medical man whose opinion had been sought would still delay to deliver any judgment until he had consulted with some impartial professional authority. Nothing short of a previous investigation of this kind would be felt, by any honourable practitioner, to justify a charge of criminality against a colleague—and nothing short of criminality ought to tempt him to make any charge at all. In all cases short of this, true etiquette suggests that he should take refuge in absolute silence, if he cannot justify his brother practitioner. And whenever he has reason to

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suppose that personal spite has instigated the request for his judicial opinion, he feels bound to throw cold water with all possible emphasis on the complaints of his client.

Another case, well adapted to test a medical man's loyalty to other members of the profession, is that of a physician called to give a second opinion in a case with the treatment of which the patient's friends are angrily dissatisfied. In many instances, of course, the original attendant is only too happy to assent to the consultation taking place, and the meeting of the doctors passes off in a perfectly friendly way. Such is not always the case, however: for the first medical attendant may have reason to know beforehand that the opinions of his proposed assistant differ so radically from his own that there is little chance of their coming to an agreement. Under these circumstances, the conference is almost inevitably entered on, by one or both parties, in a spirit of involuntary hostility: and it may well happen that they may find themselves obliged to tell the patient that there is no hope of their agreement. Now comes the awkward point: the patient or his friends must of course decide as to which of the proffered counsels they will be guided by; and the position of the adviser whose opinion is overridden becomes such as to test severely his loyalty to a colleague, as such. For his pride, joined with a certain swelling indignation born of strong scientific conviction, may urge him to throw up the case and retire; while his duty certainly bids him remain, and assist in carrying out thoroughly the plan of his rival.

One more illustration of the mutual relations of doctors will suffice us. A medical man happens to have a dear friend who is dangerously ill, and who is being treated by another doctor in a way which his medical friend disapproves. Is the latter to interfere, and to tell the patient or his friends his own opinion? He would certainly not do so until he had consulted the regular attendant privately. The latter would probably request his co-operation in the treatment and throw the responsibility of deciding whose advice shall be followed upon the patient's friends.

The above illustrations will, perhaps, sufficiently indicate the substantial principle on which doctors, though often unconsciously, base their conduct to each other. But, as in common life, the treatment which we bestow on any man depends much on whether or not we believe that he is acting honestly, so in the medical profession, any person who claims the benefit of that particular kind of social justice which we call etiquette must be able to prove that he is acting in good faith. The essence of all quackery, properly so called, is the absence of a *bona fides*, and it would be therefore interesting to define, if possible, what constitutes proof of such deficiency.

In the first place, it is needless to say that if any man pretends to understand the art of curing human diseases, he implies that he has studied the vital structure and functions of the human body, the natural history of diseases, and the effect of medicines on the healthy and on the sick

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person respectively. Studies such as these are enormously expensive and troublesome, and can only be carried out by means of the association of students in a hospital school, such as exist in our metropolitan and some of our provincial cities. Unless, therefore, a medical man could give evidence of a reasonable period of study passed at such an institution, he might justly be suspected of bad faith in pretending to be able to cure: if he had passed such a period of study, diligently employed, he could have no difficulty in passing a legally qualifying examination; we should ask him, therefore, to produce his diploma, and we should justly deny, to a man who could not do so, the special courtesies due to a scientific colleague. But this is a comparatively simple case. A far more embarrassing question is, what attitude to assume towards a man who possesses the legal diploma, but disgraces it by his practice—we do not mean morally, but intellectually? What is the nature of the trust committed into the hands of a medical man at the time of his receiving a licence to practise? It certainly is not intended by his examiners as a permission to be blind to the progress of science and to continue obstinately to stick fast *super antiquas vias*, in the bad sense: and yet the temptation to do this is strong, and, in a certain number of cases, will prevail; nor could we expect anything else from the weakness of human nature. It is obvious that such a line of conduct involves a breach of good faith, which is quite as bad as that committed by the unlicensed quack, and, in strict justice, the doctor who follows this course ought to be denied the courtesies of the cloth. But this case is a proof that the laws of medical etiquette share the defects of all human laws; for, unfortunately, it is at present practically impossible to carry out the sentence on this class of offenders. So profoundly ignorant is the public of medical things, that this sort of negative conservatism is rather encouraged than otherwise by one class of patients, and the men who practise it sometimes obtain a large business and a high social consideration, which render it difficult to enforce professional penalties against them. It is worthy of note, that from this class of practitioners, happily becoming small, has proceeded nearly all that is exaggerated and unreal in medical etiquette—all that makes it resemble the vexatious frivolity of a Spanish code of ceremony.

The etiquette of doctors in dealing with their patients is regulated, of course, for the most part, by rules of ordinary good-breeding, which it is not necessary to dilate upon here. There is one question, however, which it is not easy to answer, and out of which arise many practical difficulties. How far is the doctor to treat his patient as a confidant? How far is it advisable for him to explain the reasons for the treatment he adopts, and the chances, so far as they can humanly be calculated, of success?

As for the question of explaining reasons for treatment, that may always be left to the doctor's discretion in each case, since it is a matter on which he clearly has the right to decide absolutely. The other question,—whether the doctor ought to make the patient a confidant of his ideas as to the probable issue of the illness,—cannot be so easily settled;

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and indeed must be answered in very different terms, according to the circumstances of the individual case. Abstractedly speaking, no doubt the patient has a right, at all times, to insist on knowing the real opinion of his medical adviser as to the prospects of his malady. But as it would be manifestly foolish to give the patient this gratification at the expense of doing his health serious injury by the alarm which a very unfavourable opinion would excite in his mind, it is certainly justifiable to evade questionings on these points *within certain limits*. And as these limits are difficult to define, it may be as well at once to separate certain cases in which it certainly is not lawful to deceive the patient.

To argue from small things to great: in the first place, it clearly would not be just to allow a dying patient to remain ignorant of his state when there was a probability that this would lead him to neglect matters of business highly important to relatives and friends, unless the shock of the news of his danger would be likely to accelerate his death materially. And even in cases where the prospect of death was more remote, but still (humanly speaking) certain to be realized within a limited time, there could be no question, except that of the proper moment, as to the doctor's duty to declare his opinion when such interests were at stake. But he might very fairly shift all the responsibility, as to the manner of communicating the news to the patient, upon the relatives of the latter.

The influence which spiritual considerations ought to have in deciding a medical man to divulge a patient's real condition to him, is a very grave and difficult subject; and it is one respecting which we take leave to say that doctors are often grievously misunderstood and misrepresented by well-meaning persons, especially by the clergy. To take the case of persons actually in dying circumstances, with but a few hours of this world before them—here, since the hope of saving life has fled, the part of common honesty seems to be to inform the patient truly of his condition; and yet various arguments have been urged upon the other side. It is the duty of the doctor, say some, not merely to save life if he can, but, in cases where he is powerless to avert death, to promote the euthanasia, the peaceful and painless termination of life. In many cases, to inform the patient of an immediately approaching death would be to throw him into an agony of spiritual excitement; while, on the other hand, it is difficult to believe that, in his enfeebled condition, the mind could work freely and to useful purpose in the short time which remains.

There is a great deal of truth in these remarks. There can be no doubt that the doctor is bound to soothe, as well as to cure; and it is equally certain that the unexpected news of impending death would be to most persons very agitating. And it must be allowed that the extreme languor and feebleness of all mental operations, so far as we can see them, in the great majority of dying persons, give little hope that any useful self-examination can be made by moribund patients. To these considerations we reply that, putting aside altogether the question of supernatural

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influence, as a topic unfit for discussion here, we have yet one answer which virtually settles the whole matter. By virtue of his very office the doctor is *no theologian*, that is, no decider of theological questions; it is not for him to meddle in these things as one having any authority; he is but the priest of another and a humbler temple. He is bound to deliver himself of the particular message which he has to tell (either to the patient or his friends), for this is one chief reason why doctors are employed, and common honesty demands that the tacit compact be fulfilled. The *only* exception to this rule is when there is a strong probability that the mental agitation produced will cut short life at once, or at least much more rapidly than it would otherwise have been brought to an end.

And still less, if we reflect upon it, does it seem justifiable for the medical attendant to allow patients who are doomed to death within a limited period, but who are not in immediate danger, to remain ignorant of their condition. For here the mental faculties are not overclouded, there is still time and strength for the performance of many important duties, still clearness of vision sufficient for a review of the long procession of past events and feelings. Concealment of the truth appears to us, in this case, to be simply unjust, although we well know that the motive which prompts it is humane. An instance of this mistaken kindness once came under our notice, and impressed us deeply. A celebrated hospital physician was walking the round of his patients, attended by a large number of students. Among the sick was a poor girl, evidently the victim of advanced consumption, but whose spirits were naturally buoyant, and were raised still higher by the flattering promises of probable amendment of health which, to our surprise, the doctor gave her. But no sooner had we left the ward than the great man turned to us, and said, with a smile of gentle melancholy, "Heaven forgive me! I could not tell a poor girl like that the real state of the case, you know."

The mistake here made was a natural one, but it was not the less a mistake, and a grave one. It was neither more nor less than allowing sentimentality to weigh against and prevail over the promptings of truth and of justice, and it cannot be too strongly reprobated. With mere sentimental likings and dislikings the physician has nothing to do; he is bound to mortify to the utmost his personal predilections, and to act simply as an honest adviser; and it may be added, that he will never need to contravene, in so acting, the instincts of real and far-sighted benevolence. It is obvious that, while weakly shrinking from the performance of a duty which might give present pain, the medical man in the story we have related was laying up for his patient, in all probability, much future anguish against the time of inevitable disclosure: and we are glad to think that such mistakes are not often made.

But there are numerous cases in which the physician's duty is by no means so clear as in the cases which we have referred to. It may, and often does happen, that he is himself doubtful as to his patient's chances of recovery, though in his private opinion the balance of probabilities

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may be against a favourable issue, while he has the certain conviction that to tell the sick man of his danger would be to affect those chances fatally. Under such circumstances he will probably feel that his readiest escape from a difficulty of conscience is to communicate the real state of affairs to the patient's friends under a pledge that it shall not be repeated to the sufferer himself. But he has no right to take even this course unless he has a reasonable belief in their discretion ; for secrecy in this case forms a part of his therapeutical armament, and he is not justified in throwing away a single weapon causelessly. So long as there is any hope, so long ought the interest of the patient's bodily health to outweigh every consideration in the physician's mind; for he is the appointed custodian of those interests, and must do his duty in regard to them. It will easily be seen that the responsibility of coming to a decision in such cases is a heavy one, and that it must press severely on a conscientious man ; and we may add that the situation of the physician is far more often one that should command sympathy than blame, even when he decides wrongly in such instances, and disaster follows from his conduct.

And now we have to consider medical etiquette as it affects the relations of the whole *corps médical* to the general public. This is a subject far too little reflected on; but the great importance of which is manifesting itself more and more clearly every day.

It is not in accordance with a high conception of etiquette, for the man of science to proclaim one scientific fact so loudly and clamorously as to divert the attention of an unwary audience from other facts which materially modify its value. When, for instance, a well-known analyst declares (with such emphasis that one could fancy tears of gratitude standing in his eyes) that B—— and Co.'s London stout is a pure, a wholesome, a nourishing, a life-giving drink, he allows a too innocent public to suppose that the vats of Guinness, and Barclay, and Buxton, and Meux contain but a dull and muddy liquor, a mere sap of the tree of knowlege of evil! And when the same great man asserts that, after minute inspection, of the most severely scientific kind, he has ascertained a fact which he thinks it necessary to print, viz. that D—— and Co. really sell pure and well-grown tea, does he not plainly hint that in this country the sale of sloe-leaves is mournfully common, if not all but universal? We are sorry to say that we once saw a still more striking instance of limited appreciation: it was no less than a testimonial, framed and glazed, in a hair-dresser's window, purporting to emanate from a very well-known practitioner, and bearing fervid witness to the renovating influence of a—hair-wash! However, we should make some allowance here. It was probably in the first delirium of joy on discovering that he had derived personal benefit from the preparation, that the man of science wrote those unguarded lines.

The custom here touched upon, of scientific men giving testimonials to particular tradesmen, for which they are paid, and which the tradesmen at once turn into money to large amounts, is indeed a very serious

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one; and it may well be considered whether such a practice ought not to be checked, or at least regulated, by legislative enactment. It is very easy to speak with indignation of the scientific men who act in this way, but the fault is not only, or even in greatest part, on their side. It is chiefly to be found in the increasing laxity of commercial morals, which allows respectable merchants to use without a scruple means of increasing their trade which are, in truth, nothing less than so many forms of deception. The merchant dares to offer a bribe to the scientific man, though he is not so foolish as to put it in that coarse form, which he knows would be too revolting. And the man of science, quieting his first qualms of conscience with the fallacious truism that the goods really *are* excellent, reports accordingly, with all due flourish of scientific trumpets.

There is another way in which, by the statement of a part only of the truth, scientific men have it in their power to do much harm. In an article in the March number of the *Cornhill Magazine*, we noticed and deplored the scandalous conflicts of medical evidence which so frequently have occurred on criminal trials; and we ventured to suggest what the nature of any remedy must be which could hope to have any success in abating this evil. The remedy essentially consisted in making the whole business of medical evidence in courts of law an organized affair, and removing it out of the region of personal animosities and rivalries, and of grosser temptations. And this is, in fact, the essence of all genuine etiquette: it is a league of honest men who, for the best of purposes—that of preserving their honesty—submit themselves to certain restraining rules and regulations. In such a league it would be utterly forbidden to suggest views of what *might have been*, or to relate facts the whole value of which depends on their relation to other facts which are ignored.

We have thus endeavoured to give some illustrations of the way in which the laws of medical etiquette, reflecting as they do the essential character of medical science itself, are no mean palladium of the highest qualities which all high-minded practitioners would desire to see perpetuated in the profession. And now we have a few words to say concerning the degree in which medical men themselves maintain the standard which these rules point to.

It must be owned that the correspondence between what is tacitly acknowledged to be right, and what is actually practised, is not very exact—that is to say, not in all cases. There is a class of men composed of isolated individuals in all ranks of the profession, for whom the bitter struggle with an adverse fortune is too much, who succumb from want of strength; and because they are not able to bear the accumulated weight of poverty and excessive labour, choose the shorter paths to fortune, even though they be somewhat miry. Every such case tells, and is glaringly conspicuous to the public. Who is so well known and so freely talked of as the practitioner with quackish tendencies? Every foolish vulgar thing

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the poor man ever did or said becomes the subject of a jest or denunciation; even his absurd habit of wearing black trousers, tail-coat, and white neckcloth, in the daytime, though harmless enough in itself, goes to make up an ideal which the intelligent classes of society despise and detest in its entirety. But let the reader try and estimate fairly what is the proportion of such men (having any legal qualification) to the respectable classes of the profession, and we think he will confess that it is at least as small as that of the black sheep to the white in either of the other professions which are called "learned." If this opinion be correct, it must certainly be to the laws of etiquette, the tradition of our forefathers, that we owe this immunity from any extraordinary tendency to humbug and quackery; for the temptations to it are enormous in the medical profession, and such as lawyers and divines have no idea of. The ignorance of the public on medical matters is so complete, and the very first steps in the path to knowledge of these matters seems to it so mysteriously difficult, that the humblest village doctor finds himself a hero—almost a magician—to a number of people. What a trial for men to have to endure whose minds are not particularly well trained, as from poverty is often the case with medical men! There must surely be some potent influence at work, keeping them the honest, steady-going, genuine men that, as a class, they are. Doubtless, a part of this effect is due to the sobering influence of looking constantly in the face of the great mysteries of Life, Disease, and Death; but these are influences with which one soon becomes familiar, too familiar to be inspired with the awe with which they struck the mind at first. We cannot doubt that it is the unwritten law which we, borrowing a tinsel-sounding foreign name, have called Etiquette, which really does, in great measure, produce this salutary effect; and we trust the day is far off when anything like a demolition of the outworks, which, if our view be right, guard the honesty and purity of the medical profession, shall be levelled, and the principle introduced of every man fighting simply for his own head, and in defiance of the interests of those to whom he ought naturally to look with warm sympathy.

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Farmers.

The "British farmer" belongs to that category of ideal personages under which come the "British merchant," the "old English gentleman," the "Irish peasant," and other embodiments of certain national characteristics, which have now to a great extent been, as it were, dispersed, and diffused over the general body politic. He still does survive, however, as a distinct type, if not exactly answering to all that our fancy may have painted him. It is rare, certainly, to meet with a genuine Poyser, perhaps the most perfect representation of the old race of farmers that has ever been produced in fiction. But something very like him may still be met with in the more secluded parts of England, and when once encountered he is not likely to be forgotten. He lived like Dandie Dinmont, in a kind of "sluttish plenty;" farming fairly, saving little, reading nothing: nursing, generally speaking, a sincere veneration for Church and King as the barriers which, somehow or other, kept out Frenchmen, kickshaws, and Catholics; respecting the clergyman and the squire as representatives of these two institutions; given to few vices and contented with few pleasures; altogether a sturdy, stationary, simple-hearted kind of man, who perplexed himself very little with politics, or, indeed, with any one's affairs except his own, and those of his own parish.

Now, however, this kind of man is the exception and not the rule. The pursuit of farming has extended itself so much among all classes of society, that farmers have to be divided into several distinct classes, no one of which corresponds with any exactness to the traditional agriculturist. When people now talk of farmers, they have only a very vague idea of what they mean by the word. Sometimes they mean any man who farms at all; sometimes any man who makes a livelihood of farming; sometimes only the regular tenant farmer who works upon the land himself, and in no way aspires to be a gentleman. It is, however, only to the last two of these classes that the term properly belongs, and more properly to the third than to the second. That is to say, it would always be an adequate account of a tenant farmer to say that he was a farmer; but it would not always be so in the case of any man who lived by farming. For instance, many men of good birth and university education have of late years taken to agriculture as a trade. But if one were asked what such a man was, and replied merely that he was a farmer, we should probably convey a very erroneous impression of him to the inquirer's mind.

Nor would it always be sufficient to say that such a one was a gentleman farmer. In many parts of England, it is true, this title denotes exclusively the gentleman who happens to farm. But elsewhere it is

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simply the modern substitute for the yeoman, signifying a man who has land of his own, and is wealthier and more independent than the majority of tenants. Dismissing, therefore, all that class of persons who, if they farm at all, really do it either as an amusement or a scientific experiment, or whose proper work in life, at all events, is not that of a farmer, such as the nobility, squirearchy, and clergy of these realms, there remain, upon the whole, three classes, first, the gentleman farmer who is so called because he is a gentleman; secondly, the gentleman farmer who is so called to distinguish him from the tenant farmer; and thirdly, the tenant farmer himself, the most unmixed specimen of the genus. All these, of course, have a great deal in common *qua* farmers. But they are often wide as the poles asunder in education and intelligence; so that when smart London clubmen speak glibly of the "bucolic mind," they should recollect of what very various ingredients that mind is now composed; and that a good deal of refinement and literature and general culture is mixed up with it, which leavens the mass, and renders it more worthy of reverence than they are, too frequently, disposed to think it.

The gentleman farmer number one is almost always a capital kind of man to know. With the tastes and personal habits of the most refined classes he often unites a kind of jolly simplicity that one does not always find in squires. He feels that he is to some extent roughing it, that he is, as it were, "in the bush." He is conscious that not a very few years ago he must have been either a barrister, a soldier, or a clergyman, struggling perhaps on a short allowance or a poor living. Now he has shaken off those social fetters; leads a healthier and freer life than he could have done then; has amusements and luxuries which, in a profession, he could perhaps only have sighed for; and, what is more, can marry without inconvenience, as soon as the fated pair of eyes happen to look into his own. He has also this advantage over the regular village squire, that although his social circle is a limited one, it is not so limited as his. He sees a greater variety of human beings; he associates more with his fellow-creatures; he goes to market, and rubs up against cattle-dealers and corn-factors. On the other hand, he has, of course, the benefit of all the good society which his own neighbourhood affords. Thus he becomes more a man of the world, easier to get on with, and has fewer prejudices than his ostensible social superior. The family of such a man are pretty much what we can suppose the family of a well-to-do clergyman to be, if we eliminate the clerical aroma. His daughters are apt to be very charming: accomplished, and refined, with a sweet subdued air of country life about them, like the fragrance of a beanfield in June; great at croquet, picnics, and the conveyance of luncheon to shooting parties on a hazy hot September day. Here is your true Arcadia—especially when there are lots of birds!

The gentleman farmer number two is a far less desirable kind of man. In the first place, he is not a gentleman; in the second place, he is sure to be badly educated; in the third place, he is very likely to be both purse-proud and vulgar. He is, nine times out of ten, much fatter

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than either of the other two grades. But fatness, with him, does not always mean good-humour. He is usually, however, of a jovial turn, and is fond of giving dinner-parties, which comprise the doctor, the squire's steward, the attorney from the next market town, and a brace of farmers like himself. They drink heady port-wine after dinner; then play at whist or loo, and have some final brandy-and-water before they disperse. The women of his family have, of course, no pretension to be ladies. Here again, however, let it not be supposed that there are no exceptions to the rule. There are many. But we must hurry on to number three, the party we love best of all.

This is the farmer, "pure and simple"—may he forgive us for coupling his honest name with any such outlandish phrase; who rents his two, three, or five hundred acres, as the case may be, attends exclusively to his business, and aims at being nothing but what his fathers have ever been before him. It is in this class that vestiges of the old farmer character, shadows and faint echoes of Mr. Poyser, may still be traced. These are the men who still have faith in old ale, which they drink by sips; who like standing outside the church door after service with their hands in the pockets of their drab knee-breeches, to compare notes on crops and prices, and pay their duty to the vicar. These are they who, if you call upon them while out shooting, have the natural politeness to offer you only what they know to be good, namely, a jug of home-brewed, whereas the more genteel party insists upon "a glass of sherry." Even among tenant farmers, however, this particular kind of man is growing scarcer and scarcer. We can remember one or two in whose sons hunting was a high crime and misdemeanor, and whose daughters plied their fancy-work in fear and secrecy. When one of these old gentlemen wished to be especially bitter, he would address the son as "my lord," and the sister as "my lady," the latter, a pretty and lady-like girl enough, being occasionally goaded by his sarcasms into tucking up her sleeves and petticoats and scrubbing the floor till she was crimson. Heaven in its mercy removed the worthy man to a better sphere ere crinoline invaded his home: *id rebus defuit unum.* That *would* have brought his grey hairs in sorrow to the grave. Still almost all these men belong to a past generation. Here and there, indeed, a man under forty may still be found who belongs to this class. But that is only in sequestered districts, where *very* primitive manners still linger among all ranks of the population. He is then rather a touching spectacle—a sort of Smike among farmers; the old-fashioned dress, the deferential manner, and the simplicity of ideas which sit pleasingly on the grey-haired sire, not appearing to equal advantage in the stalwart offspring. Generally the tenant farmer, though his manners and customs have altered of late years, is not intellectually much more advanced than his grandfathers. They differ, of course, very greatly among themselves; but the representative man is still guiltless of literature, little given to reflection, and slow to take an interest in novelties. There is, usually speaking, but little

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affectation in him. He is civil, homely, and hospitable. The ancient manner, smacking as it did of the old feudal relation between a lord and his retainers, has disappeared simply because the relation has itself disappeared, though the shadow lingered long after the substance had departed. But still it has left behind it many of the old sterling virtues which we commonly associate with agriculture.

The farmer's connection with his landlord is now, however, almost wholly a commercial one; and since the repeal of the corn laws there is not even any one great interest which they share in common. Thus a certain reserve is frequently to be observed among the younger race of farmers, as of men who still desire to be perfectly courteous and accommodating, but who feel no longer quite that same sympathy with, and attachment towards, the gentleman, as such, which their fathers felt. They seem to wish you to comprehend that they stand upon their own bottom, and are obliged to nobody for anything. This makes intercourse with them less genial than it used to be; but it is part of the inevitable change which time has brought with it to all English society, and considering it from a purely rational point, there is no ground, perhaps, for grumbling. The change, however, has doubtless robbed the idea of the English farmer of much of its picturesqueness. Tweed trousers are not nearly so effective in point of colour as yellow leggings; nor is an increased rental and scientific agriculture a romantic exchange for that personal service which it was always supposed that the tenant would willingly have rendered. Not but what we think it very probable that, on many large estates to this day, the tenants would arm and fight under their landlord's banner in a cause which approved itself to their reason. But they would no longer accept their view of public affairs implicitly from him, or go out merely because he asked them.

The wives and daughters of these men, where they do not aspire to be fine ladies, are often very nice. But as a general rule we fear now-a-days that the old-fashioned idea of rustic beauty is seldom to be realized: a really pretty farmer's daughter of the class we are describing being quite as rare a bird as that creation of the poets, the lovely milkmaid. We expect to see a lovely mermaid quite as soon as this latter work of art, though we were bred up in a dairy county. Whether it is that these nymphs have all become extinct because the "fine gentlemen" from London, to whose amusement, a hundred years ago, they were necessary in the country, have become extinct also, and that in this way the supply has followed the demand, we cannot undertake to say. But they are not to be found now by gentle or simple. Still, a farmer's daughter, *when* pretty, is often very pretty indeed. Perhaps the nature of her occupations, and the aspect of the people round about her, afford a more than usually favourable contrast with a delicate skin, a clear pale complexion—

Like privet when it flowers—

a softly swelling contour and a lissome figure.

Such are the three chief classes into which farmers may be divided.

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Of course they run into one another. But upon the whole we think they fairly represent the broader and more generic varieties of agricultural life. We will now, however, beg our readers to bear in mind that our remaining remarks must be understood upon the whole as applicable rather to the last-mentioned variety of the species than to the two former. Not but what, of course, they will have occasional reference to the entire class; but naturally the higher you ascend in the scale, the more does the farmer come to share in the attributes of a much larger segment of the social circle, and the less to be conspicuous for special humours and peculiarities.

It is often supposed that a country life is more favourable to the humanities than a town life: that it exercises more effectively the imaginative and contemplative faculties, and supplies healthier food to the generous qualities of our nature. This proposition as a whole we are not about to call in question. We would only remark that, in order to receive the full benefit which it ascribes to the spiritual atmosphere of a country life, a man must have a mind so constituted as to be able to absorb and assimilate it. Probably few men are quite destitute of the capacity to do this. But we believe that some are; and also that some occupations more than others are calculated as it were to close up our moral pores, and so to neutralize the operation of those external influences by which our neighbours are affected. Now it is obvious that a farmer's labours having a constant tendency to fix his attention upon the productive and lucrative aspects of the land he lives in, are so far calculated to blind his eyes to any other, and so to deaden his perception of that moral music which copse and hedgerow, meadow and corn-field, the stately elms and the lazy brook, are assumed by our present hypothesis to be capable of expressing. It is a curious circumstance, but it is nevertheless quite true, that it is commoner to hear the beauties of the country spoken of in an appreciative tone by a day-labourer than by a regular farmer. The farmer, no doubt, does imbibe a certain amount of wholesome influence from the scenes in which his life is passed; but the process is continually retarded, and the effects impaired, by the nature of his daily occupations. Just as we are often told that it is a very bad plan to teach children to read out of the Bible, because, by regarding it as a task-book, they lose not only reverence for its character, but also the power of appreciating in after life its great beauties; and just as Byron could never come to like Horace because he had been made to work at it as a text of scholarship, so the man absorbed in utilizing nature is more or less cut off from the point of view which reveals her best beauties. We must, therefore, be prepared to modify very much that estimate of agricultural character which is founded upon the softening and humanizing influences to which it is necessarily exposed.

It is likewise to be remembered that in farming there is less speculation than in other trades. By speculation we do not exactly mean gambling, but those wider possibilities both of expansion and invention, which belong to commerce. A new country opened up, a new process

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or a new manufacture discovered, may make the fortunes of millions. Every man engaged in trade in ever so small a way has these possibilities before him. As every French private was said to carry a marshal's bâton in his knapsack, so, without much strain upon reality, may every little shopkeeper in England be said to carry in his pocket the chance of becoming a millionnaire. That the spirit which is thus engendered in commercial men does often lead to ill results may be true enough, but still it undoubtedly tends to enlarge the mind, and to make it capable of taking in a longer chain of cause and effect. It warms the imagination, and habituates merchants of the higher class to look forward to remote results, and to see great events in their beginnings. But the farmer, in spite of all that chemistry and machinery have done for him, is still much of the terræ filius.

> Agricola incurvo terram dimovit aratro,
> Hic anni labor.

He passes the year in the same round of toil. And partly, perhaps, from the regularity and rapidity with which immediate visible results follow upon all that he does, partly from the intensely *real* nature of his occupations, he acquires that strong *cui bono* turn of mind to which we have already referred, but from which, oddly enough, he is often supposed to enjoy some special immunity. We believe there is no class of men more thoroughly utilitarian in many points of view than farmers are, and were it not that this spirit is neutralized by another one presently to be mentioned, very curious changes might occur in the present state of rural politics. This sentiment colours all their ideas of religion and government, and often manifests itself in the most quaint and unexpected shapes. We recollect a little while ago hearing a farmer, probably above the average of his class in general intelligence, observe that in his opinion England ought to go to war at certain intervals, whether provoked to it or not. And what does the reader suppose was his reason for this way of thinking? It was not because war kept alive the martial spirit of the country, or caused us to be respected by other nations, or might make fresh conquests and colonies. Not at all; but simply because we *had an army:* which to pay, clothe, and feed without using seemed to him an absurdity. It was, then, in stable language, eating its head off: a process which was just as aggravating in the case of armies as of horses. Clearly it should be the wish of every true patriot that the frost of peace should break up after a time, and the soldier be saddled for the field to do something in return for his rations. Another still more striking example of the same tone of mind we remember to have witnessed during one of the two or three hard winters which followed each other in succession some few years ago. The hard frost had broken up with unusual suddenness, and a heavy flood had risen in less than four-and-twenty hours along the low-lying meadow country, where the scene of our anecdote is placed. Being out for a "constitutional" about four o'clock on a dismal January afternoon, we suddenly, on turning a corner, came upon the bulky figure of a man

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clad in a large drab uppercoat, and leaning on the gate which opened into a small meadow now entirely under water. The man's countenance was indicative of great dissatisfaction: but there was something more than mere dissatisfaction visible on his broad red face. A look of vacant perplexity, a sort of struggling wish to interrogate the universe in general as to the meaning of its present phenomena, arrested our attention at once. We soon learned the cause of his bewilderment. He had, it appeared, for some months previously been putting out some sheep to graze at a village about ten miles off, not having room for them on his own farm. The day before the flood began he had brought them all the way home for the express purpose of quartering them in this particular meadow. They had hardly been turned in when it became necessary to bring them out again. This disposition of events our farmer professed himself wholly at a loss to interpret. "It seems so hod," he said more than once with the air of a deeply injured man. What *was* the use of this flood coming at that particular moment? It could serve no good end that he could see. And although he did not go so far as to assert openly that it was a special visitation on himself, his mind being incapable of coming to any such definite conclusion without much greater labour than he had yet expended on the subject; yet one could see that by reason of his inability to perceive its immediate purpose, some such half-formed thoughts were working uneasily in his brain, and that he was unconsciously asking himself whether, after all, it was possible that such things could be; and that a dead set *was* sometimes made against individuals by those mysterious and occult forces which were what people meant, he supposed, by nature, providence, or fate. The contemplation of this problem was evidently too much for him; his tea-time had arrived, we knew; but yet he stirred not; and we left him still gazing moodily over the dreary cold expanse of water which had marred in this inexplicable way his pastoral arrangements.

We have said that the utilitarian and materialistic spirit which is characteristic of farmers is counteracted by another and still more deeply rooted sentiment, which prevents the former one from having much effect upon their conduct. We mean that strong natural conservatism which, in the absence of exceptional causes, is always to be found in farmers. The immutability of the operations of nature, the certain recurrence of the seasons, the very permanence and stability of all the objects round about them, generate a moral habit which shrinks from any kind of change, and disposes men to rest in confidence under the shadow of immemorial traditions. With the dweller in towns, at all events in these latter days, everything, on the contrary, is undergoing perpetual transformation. The street in which he played as a boy is pulled down before he grows into a man. Old landmarks disappear in all directions. New churches, shops, and hotels rise almost "like exhalations." Everything around him breathes of progress, invention, expectation, and the greatness of what is to be. The farmer, on the other hand, still sees through every stage of life the same objects which saluted him in his

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infancy. The old hills which looked down upon his birth attend him to his grave. The old foot-path over the brook, and across the pasture, and through the beans; the row of old trees with the half-dozen rooks' nests at the top; the very shape of each separate field, and the turns and twists of every hedge; remain as they have been for centuries, and are likely to be for centuries more. All breathe of repose, antiquity, immobility, and the sanctity of what is. The influence of this atmosphere (not to be confounded, be it remembered, with its æsthetic influences) shows itself upon the farmer in the growth of a lazy but still approving acquiescence in all existing institutions, and is strong enough to contend successfully with the rival element of his character which we have already described. He supposes that they're all right. Things in general, it strikes him, seem meant to last a long time: why not the Church, the Queen, and the House of Lords? Even the dissenting farmer is seldom inspired by any hostility towards the Church. Here and there, of course, he may be goaded by an injudicious parson into open war against her claims. But otherwise his dissent is only the bequest of former times, to which he adheres from habit, but without the slightest ill-feeling towards the Church, her ministers, her offices, or her rates.

Another cause of agricultural conservatism is rather negative than positive; we mean the comparative absence of those petty social jealousies which prevail so much in large towns. It never enters into the farmer's head that he ought to associate on equal terms with the squire or the clergyman. A great number of farmers still always go to the back-door, if they have occasion to call at either house. In this respect they are perfectly unassuming; but, at the same time, perfectly free from anything like servility or cringeing. In fact, it is probable that their own self-respect is much better preserved by this course of conduct than by pushing their way into drawing-rooms, where even the best of them are not exactly ornamental. When the smart young tenant, in his turn-down collar, red scarf, and large pin, begins to talk upon professional subjects, such as stock, breeding, manure, and the like topics of elegant conversation, his remarks very often show more science than delicacy.

Farmers, however, on the whole, are, to use the slang language of the day, an eminently "good sort." Taken as a class, you find less affectation, less vulgarity—in a word, less snobbishness—among them than perhaps among any other one class of the community. In book knowledge they are certainly inferior, and their minds no doubt move more sluggishly than those of the inhabitants of cities. But, after all, if we exclude a very small circle, how much of the enjoyment of life consists either of literature or of keen intellectual contests? The farmer generally has good sense, good nature, and is always hospitable. He is not usually the kind of man one would care to travel with to Rome or Athens. But in his own house or his own fields he is often a capital companion, and always an unexceptionable host.

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Foreign Actors and the English Drama.

That our drama is extinct as literature, and our stage is in a deplorable condition of decline, no one will venture to dispute; but there are two opinions as to whether a revival is possible, or even probable, and various opinions as to the avenues through which such a revival may be approached. There are three obvious facts which may be urged against the suggestions of hope: these are, the gradual cessation of all attempts at serious dramatic literature, and their replacement by translations from the French or adaptations from novels; the slow extinction of provincial theatres, which formed a school for the rearing of actors; and, finally, the accident of genius on our stage being unhappily rarer than ever. In the face of these undeniable facts, the hopeful are entitled to advance facts of equal importance on their side. Never in the history of our stage were such magnificent rewards within the easy grasp of talent; never were there such multitudes to welcome good acting. Only let the dramatist, or the actor, appear, and not London alone but all England, not England alone but all Europe, will soon resound with his name. Dramatic literature may be extinct, but the dramatic instinct is ineradicable. The stage may be in a deplorable condition at present, but the delight in mimic representation is primal and indestructible. Thus it is that, in spite of people on all sides declaring that "they have ceased to go to the theatre," no sooner does an actor arise who is at all above the line, no sooner does a piece appear that has any special source of attraction, than the public flock to the theatre as it never flocked in what are called "the palmy days" of the drama. Fechter could play *Hamlet* for seventy consecutive nights: which to Garrick, Kemble, or Edmund Kean would have sounded like the wildest hyperbole; and the greatest success of Liston and Matthews seems insignificant beside the success of *Lord Dundreary*. There is a ready answer to such facts conveyed in the sneer at public taste, and the assertion that all intelligence has departed, leaving only a vulgar craving for "sensation pieces." It is a cheap sneer. There is a mistake respecting sensation pieces: it is not because intelligence has departed, and there is no audience for better things, but simply because the numbers of pleasure-seekers are so much increased; and at all times the bulk of the public has cared less for intelligence than for sensation, less for art than amusement. If intelligent people now go to witness inferior pieces, it is because better things are not produced; and sensation pieces, although appealing to the lowest faculties, do appeal to them effectively. If there are crowds to see the *Colleen Bawn* and the *Duke's Motto*, it is because these pieces are really good of their kind; the kind may be a low kind; but will any

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one say that the legitimate drama has of late years been represented in a style to satisfy an intellectual audience? Who would leave the "comforts of the Saut-market" for the manifold discomforts of a theatre, unless some strong intellectual or emotional stimulus were to be given in exchange? and who can be expected to submit with patience to lugubrious comedy and impossible tragedy, such as has been offered of late years to the British public? What wonder, considering that these "higher efforts" had so dreary an effect, that even the intelligent public sought amusement in efforts which were not so exalted, but really did amuse? A public seeks amusement at the theatre, and turns impatiently from dreariness to Dundreariness. Let an Edmund Kean—or any faint approach to an Edmund Kean—appear to-morrow, and the public will rush to see him as they rushed to hear Jenny Lind: the mob, because they are easily pleased and will rush to see any one about whom the world is talking; the intelligent public, because they are always ready to welcome genius. The proof of this eagerness to welcome any exceptional talent is the success of Fechter and Ristori; and, in another direction, the proof of the deplorable condition of our stage is the success of Mdlle. Stella Colas. Fechter and Ristori are both accomplished actors; not great actors, but still, within the limits of their powers, possessed of the perfect mechanism of their art; gifted, moreover, with physical and intellectual advantages which render them admirable representatives of certain parts. Mdlle. Colas, on the contrary, though she is sweetly pretty, and has a sympathetic voice, and a great deal of untrained energy, is not yet an actress; there are only the possibilities of an actress in her.

The disadvantages of a language unfamiliar as a spoken language to the great bulk of the audience, and of companions who are scarcely on a level with the actors in the open-air theatres of Italy, have not prevented Ristori from achieving an immense success; nor have the terrible disadvantages of an intonation and pronunciation which play havoc with Shakspeare's lines prevented Fechter from "drawing the town." There is something of fashion in all this, of course; something to be attributed to the mere piquancy of the fact that Shakspeare is played by a French actor: but we must not exaggerate this influence. It may draw you to the theatre out of curiosity, but it will not stir your emotion when in the theatre, and will not bring down tumultuous applause at the great scenes. No sooner are you *moved*, than you forget the foreigner in the emotion. And the proof that it really is what is excellent, and not what is adventitious, which creates the triumph of Fechter in *Hamlet*, is seen in the supreme ineffectiveness of his *Othello*. In *Ruy Blas* and the *Corsican Brothers* he was recognized as an excellent actor—not by any means a great actor, very far from that; but one who in the present condition of the stage was considered a decided acquisition. He then played *Hamlet*, and gave a new and charming representation to a part in which no actor has been known to fail; and the uncritical concluded that he was a great actor. But when he came to a part like

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Othello, which calls upon the greatest capabilities of an actor, the public then *remembered* that he was a foreigner, and discovered that he was not a tragedian. If he, or Mario, were to play *Romeo*, it is probable that the town would run after such a performance, not merely from curiosity, but from genuine delight in a representation which moved them.

I conclude, then, that there is a vast and hungry public ready to welcome and reward any good dramatist or fine actor; but in default of these, willing to be amused by *spectacles* and sensation pieces. Whether the dramatist or actor will arise, and by his influence create a stage once more, is a wider question. I shall not enter upon it here, nor shall I touch on the causes of the present condition. My purpose is rather to consider the suggestion which has been made of the probable influence of foreign actors upon our stage. Some have thought that here is an opportunity for our young actors to surprise many of the secrets of the art, and to unlearn some of their own conventional errors. In one sense this is plausible; for a young student, if at once gifted and modest, may undeniably learn much in the study of artists belonging to a wholly different school; especially if he can discriminate what is conventional in them, though unlike his own conventionalism. Nevertheless, on the whole, I think the gain likely to be small; just as the gain to our painters is small if they are early sent to Rome to study the great masters. They become imitators; and imitate what is conventional, or individual mannerism.

There is a mistake generally made respecting foreign actors, one, indeed, which is almost inevitable, unless the critic be extremely analytic, or has long been familiar with the foreign stage. I allude to the mistake of supposing an actor to be fresh and original because he has not the conventionalisms with which we are familiar on our own stage. He has those of his own. The traditions of the French, German, and Italian theatres thus appear to our unfamiliar eyes as the inventions of the actors; just as in our youth we thought it deliciously comic when the rattling young gentleman placed his cane on the gouty old gentleman's toe—a bit of "business" which now affects us with the hilarity of an old Joe Miller. When Emile Devrient played *Hamlet* with the German company, both he and the actor who took the part of *Polonius* were thought by our old playgoers to be remarkable artists, simply because the "business" was so very novel. But any one familiar with the German stage could have assured them that this business was all traditional, and could have pointed out the extremely mechanical style in which the parts were performed. It is true that English actors might have gained some hints from studying these representations; but only by discriminating those elements which fitly belong to the characters from those which were German conventionalisms.

Thus, I do not know that under any circumstances the presence of foreign actors on our stage could have more than the negative influence of teaching our actors to avoid some of their conventionalisms. It could

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only have a direct and positive influence in the case of real genius, which would display the futility of conventionalisms, and teach the actor to rely on sincerity of expression. When great effects are seen to be produced by the natural language of emotion, the intelligent actor loses his confidence in rant.

Passing from these general considerations to the special case of the foreign actors now on our stage, let us ask what probability is there of any good influence being derived from such models? Ristori is universally spoken of as the rival of Rachel: many think her superior. The difference between them seems to me the difference between talent and genius, between a woman admirable in her art, and a woman creative in her art. Ristori has complete mastery of the mechanism of the stage, but is without the inspiration necessary for great acting. A more beautiful and graceful woman, with a more musical voice, has seldom appeared; but it is with her acting as with her voice—the line which separates charm from profound emotion is never passed. When I saw her in *Lady Macbeth* my disappointment was extreme; none of the qualities of a great actress were manifested. But she completely conquered me in *Medea;* and the conquest was all the more noticeable, because it triumphed over the impressions previously received from Robson's burlesque imitation. The exquisite grace of her attitudes, the mournful beauty of her voice, the flash of her wrath, and the air of supreme *distinction* which seems native to her, gave a charm to this performance which is unforgettable. No wonder that people were enthusiastic about an actress who could give them such refined pleasure; and no wonder that few paused to be very critical of her deficiencies. I missed, it is true, the *something* which Rachel had: the sudden splendour of creative power, the burning-point of passion; yet I confess that I then thought it possible she might prove a more consummate comedian than Rachel, though so manifestly inferior to her in great moments. That supposition was a profound mistake. I discovered it on seeing *Adrienne Lecouvreur* the other night. The disappointment, not to say weariness, felt at this performance, caused me to recur to the disappointment felt at her *Lady Macbeth:* these performances marked a limit, and defined the range of her artistic power. In *Adrienne* there was still the lovely woman, with her air of distinction and her musical voice; but except in the recitation of the pretty fable of the two pigeons, the passage from Phèdre, and the one look of dawning belief brightening into rapture, as she is reassured by her lover's explanation, there was nothing in the performance which was not thoroughly conventional. Nor was this the worst fault. In the lighter scenes she was not only conventional, but committed that common mistake of conventional actors, an incongruous *mixture* of effects.

Let me explain more particularly what is meant by the term conventional acting. When an actor feels a vivid sympathy with the passion, or humour, he is representing, he *personates, i. e.* speaks through, the character; and for the moment *is* what he *represents.* He can do this only

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in proportion to the vividness of his sympathy, and the plasticity of his organization, which enables him to give *expression* to what he feels; there are certain physical limitations in every organization which absolutely prevent adequate expression of what is in the mind; and thus it is that the dramatist can rarely personate one of his own conceptions. But within the limits which are assigned by nature to every artist, the success of the personation will depend upon the vividness of his sympathy, and his honest reliance on the truth of his own individual expression, in preference to the conventional expressions which may be accepted on the stage. This is the great actor, the creative artist. The conventional artist is one who either, because he does not feel the vivid sympathy, or cannot express what he feels, or has not sufficient energy of self-reliance to trust frankly to his own expressions, cannot *be* the part, but tries to *act* it, and is thus necessarily driven to adopt those conventional means of expression with which the traditions of the stage abound. Instead of allowing a strong feeling to express itself through its natural signs, he seizes upon the conventional signs, either because in truth there is no strong feeling moving him, or because he is not artist enough to give it genuine expression; his lips will curl, his brow wrinkle, his eyes be thrown up, his forehead be slapped, or he will grimace, rant, and "take the stage," in the style which has become traditional, but which was perhaps never seen off the stage; and thus he runs through the gamut of sounds and signs which bear as remote an affinity to any real expressions, as the pantomimic conventions of ballet-dancers.

A similar contrast is observed in literature. As there are occasionally actors who *personate*—who give expression to a genuine feeling—so there are occasionally writers, not merely littérateurs, who give expression in words to the actual thought which is in their minds. The writer uses words which are conventional signs, but he uses them with a sincerity and directness of individual expression which makes them the genuine utterance of *his* thoughts and feelings; the littérateur uses conventional phrases, but he uses them without the guiding instinct of individual expression; he tries to express what others have expressed, not what is really in his own mind. With a certain skill, the littérateur becomes an acceptable workman; but we never speak of him as a *writer*, never estimate him as a man of genius, unless he can make his own soul speak to us. The conventional language of poetry and passion, of dignity and drollery, may be more or less skilfully used by a writer of talent; but he never delights us with those words which come from the heart, never thrills us with the simple touches of nature—those nothings which are immense, and which make writing memorable.

In saying that Ristori is a conventional actress, therefore, I mean that with great art she employs the traditional conventions of the stage, and reproduces the effects which others have produced, but does not deeply move us, because not herself deeply moved. Take away her beauty, grace, and her voice, and she is an ordinary comedian; whereas Kean

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and Pasta were assuredly neither handsome nor imposing in physique, and Rachel made a common Jewish physiognomy lovely by mere force of expression. In *Medea*, Ristori was conventional and admirable. In *Adrienne*, she was conventional and inartistic, for while the character was not *personated*, but simulated, it was simulated by conventional signs drawn from a totally wrong source. The comedy was the comedy of a *soubrette;* the playfulness had the *minauderie* of a frivolous woman, not the charm of a smile upon a serious face. It is a common mistake of conventional serious actors in comic scenes to imitate the "business" and manner of comic actors. The tragedian wishing to be funny, thinks he must approach the low comedy style, and is often vulgar, always ineffective, by his very efforts at being effective. Ristori might have learned from Rachel that the lighter scenes of *Adrienne* could be charming without once touching on the "business" of the *soubrette;* and playgoers who remember Helen Faucit, especially in parts like *Rosalind* (a glimpse of which was had the other night), will remember how perfectly that fine actress can represent the joyous playfulness of young animal spirits, without once ceasing to be poetical. The gaiety of a serious nature even in its excitement must always preserve a certain tone which distinguishes it from the mirth of unimpassioned natures: a certain groundswell of emotion should be felt beneath. The manner may be light, but it should spring from a deep soil. Just as we feel the difference between the comedy of Shakspeare and Molière, even when most extravagant, and the comedy of Congreve and Scribe; there is a heartier laugh, but a more serious background. At any rate, the unity of effect which is demanded in all representation is greatly damaged when, as in the case of *Adrienne* represented by Ristori, instead of the playfulness of an impassioned woman, we have a patchwork of effects—a bit of a *soubrette* tacked on to a bit of the coquette, that again to a bit of the *ingénue*, and that to a tragic part. Ristori was not one woman in several moods, but several actresses playing several scenes.

Nevertheless, while insisting on her deficiencies, I must repeat the expression of my admiration for Ristori as a distinguished actress; if not of the highest rank, she is very high, in virtue of her personal gifts, and the trained skill with which these gifts are applied. And her failures are instructive. The failures of distinguished artists are always fruitful in suggestion. The question naturally arises, why is her success so great in certain plays, and so dubious in Shakspeare or the drama? It is of little use to say that *Lady Macbeth* and *Adrienne* are beyond her means; that is only re-stating the fact; can we not trace both success and failure to one source? In what is called the ideal drama, constructed after the Greek type, she would be generally successful, because the simplicity of its motives and the artificiality of its structure, removing it from beyond the region of ordinary experience, demand from the actor a corresponding artificiality. Attitudes, draperies, gestures, tones, and elocution which would be incongruous in a drama approaching more nearly to the

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evolutions of ordinary experience, become, in the ideal drama, artistic modes of expression; and it is in these that Ristori displays a fine selective instinct, and a rare felicity of organization. All is artificial, but then all is congruous. A noble unity of impression is produced. We do not clamorously demand individual truth of character and passion; the ideal sketch suffices. It is only on a smaller scale what was seen upon the Greek stage, where the immensity of the theatre absolutely interdicted all individualizing; spectators were content with masks and attitudes where in the modern drama we demand the fluctuating physiognomy of passion, and the minute individualities of character. When, however, the conventional actress descends from the ideal to the real drama, from the simple and general to the complex and individual in personation, then she is at a disadvantage. Rachel could make this descent, as all will remember who saw her *Adrienne* or *Lady Tartuffe*; but then Rachel *personated*, she spoke through the character, she suffered her inward feelings to express themselves in outward signs; she had not to cast about her for the outward signs which conventionally expressed such feelings. She had but a limited range; there were few parts she could play; but those few she personated, those she created. I do not believe that Ristori could personate; she would always seek the conventional signs of expression, although frequently using them with consummate skill.

If what I have said is true, it is clear that the gain to our stage from the study of such an actress would be small. Her beauty, her distinction, her grace, her voice, are not imitable; and nowhere does she teach the actor to rely on natural expression. Still more is this the case with Fechter, an artist many degrees inferior to Ristori, yet an accomplished actor in his own sphere. With regard to Mdlle. Stella Colas, bad as our actors are, they have nothing to learn from her. As I said, she is very pretty, and has a powerful voice; but her performance of *Juliet*, which seems to delight so many honest spectators, is wholly without distinction. During the first two acts one recognizes a well-taught pupil, whose byplay is very good, and whose youth and beauty make a pleasant scenic illusion. The balcony scene, though not at all representing Shakspeare's *Juliet*, was a pretty and very effective bit of acting. It was mechanical, but skilful too. It assured me that she was not an actress of any spontaneity; but it led me to hope more from the subsequent scenes than she did effect. Indeed, as the play advanced, my opinion of her powers sank. No sooner were the stronger emotions to be expressed than the mediocrity and conventionalism became more salient. She has great physical energy, and the groundlings are delighted with her displays of it; nor does the monotony of her vehemence seem to weary them, more than the inartistic redundance of effort in the quieter scenes. She has not yet learned to speak a speech, but tries to make every *line* emphatic. Partly this may be due to the difficulty of pronouncing a foreign language; but not wholly so, as is shown in the redundancy of gesture and "busi-

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ness." Her elocution would be very defective in her own language; and its least defect, to my apprehension, is the imperfection of her English accent. With all her vehemence, she is destitute of passion; she "splits the ears of the groundlings," but moves no human soul. Her looks, tones, gestures—all have the well-known melodramatic unreality; and if a British public riotously applauds her energetic passages, it is but justice to that public to say that it *also* applauds the ranting *Romeo*, and other amazing representatives of the play.

With regard to the young actress herself about whom I am forced to speak thus harshly, I see so much *material* for future distinction, that I almost regret this early success. So much personal charm, so much energy, and so much ambition, may even yet carry her to the front ranks; but at present, I believe that every French critic would be astonished at the facility with which English audiences have accepted his young countrywoman; and he would probably make some derogatory remarks upon our insular taste. I do not for one moment deny her success—I only point to its moral. The stage upon which such acting could be regarded as excellent is in a pitiable condition. It is good mob acting: charming the eye and stunning the ear. The audiences have for so long been unused to see any truer or more refined representation, that they may be excused if, misled by the public press, and the prestige attached to the young Frenchwoman because she is French, they go prepared to see something wonderful, and believe that a *Juliet* so unlike anything they have ever seen is really a remarkable representation. The applauders find their more intelligent friends unwilling to admit that Mdlle. Colas is at present anything more than a very pretty woman, and peevishly exclaim, "Hang it! you are so difficult to please." But I believe that were the stage in a more vigorous condition, there would be no difference of opinion on this point. If Mdlle. Colas finds easy admirers, it is because, as the Spaniards say, in the kingdom of the blind the one-eyed is king.

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"Mrs. Archie."

I.

The dwelling-house at Glenrig lay towards the sea, under sheltering hills, in a mountainous nook of the county Antrim. It was a romantic old place, and, of course, a legend clung to it. The story ran that a mysterious treasure lay secreted somewhere within the walls, supposed to have been hidden, ages since, on the occasion of a visit paid to the mountains by Cromwell's soldiers. The Mistress MacArthur of that day had given a ball on a certain night, and danced until a late hour, in a yellow satin gown and a quantity of jewels. Early next morning the unwelcome visitors had arrived, and the family fled empty-handed, but no jewels had been seen in the house, neither then, nor ever afterwards. Therefore, the gossips held, some secret hiding-place had been resorted to, and one day a prize must come to light. The legend of the treasure had passed down through many generations, but latterly it had almost died out. One old woman in the neighbourhood, who claimed descent from a confidential servant of the above-mentioned Mistress MacArthur, had pretended to know the exact spot where the treasure lay, and all the circumstances of its burial. But this old woman belonged to a spiteful race, and would never tell her secret, if secret she possessed.

Aunt Penelope believed in it, and she had tried many plans to find out whether or not old Nannie knew more than she knew herself. There was no end to the sneers she encountered from aunt MacAlister on the subject of her credulity; but, whether from charity, or with a view of conciliating old Nannie, she did induce aunt Janette to take home, as playfellow for Letitia, a little girl, the old woman's grandchild. However, the girl had turned out badly and been sent away, after which old Nannie and she had left the country, so that there was no longer a chance for aunt Penelope's craze of finding the treasure being satisfied.

And, indeed, this present family seemed about as little likely to discover it as any of their predecessors. Old Randal MacArthur, who had been visited with paralysis, was deaf, and had never quite recovered the use of his limbs, sat constantly in his chair, a patient cheerful Christian, willing to linger on among his children and his clan of friends as long as it pleased Heaven to leave him, but dreading nothing upon earth so much as change of any kind. His wife—"aunt Janette," as she was called by some scores of nephews and nieces—was a little, low-voiced woman, scarcely less noiseless than her own shadow. Her daughters, Mary and Rachel, were each a fair copy of their mother—not in person, but in the placidity of their tempers, and the unwearied quietude of their demeanour. All three

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Arrival of the Bride

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would have been terrified at the thought of breaking in on the still routine of their life by pulling down walls or dragging up floors in search of a thing the chances of whose existence hung on a legend. Letitia laughed at it. She was an orphan whom old Randal had claimed in her infancy by virtue of some mythical fifty-sixth cousinship, and had brought up as his youngest daughter. She was a busy spirit, quick in her motions, clear in her judgment, ready with her help, and, consequently, in sleepy Glenrig the household fairy, the ordering genius of the place from garret to cellar. She loved the old story, and laughed at it; pulled it to pieces one day, and put it together again the next, dressing it up in the most brilliant colours.

The only person who might have shown any energy in the matter was Archie, the eldest of the family, and only son of the house, who was at present trying to make his way at the English bar; and, spite of his Irish tongue and his Irish birth, was making it. But his energies and ambition had found a more practical channel than among broken walls bedded with imaginary treasure. Archie had enough to do, for the MacArthurs had been waxing poorer of late years, and he had gone forth to make for himself an independent name and fortune. Had the making of this fortune not been necessarily a tedious process, some thought that a certain pair of bright eyes which kept Glenrig in mischief and sunshine would have been even now shining beside him in London. However, people only surmised. The only one who could say anything on the subject was Letitia, and she—who could be discreet, "close," aunt Penelope said, when it pleased her—she, Letitia, kept her own counsel.]

The two aunts were frequent visitors, not dwellers, at Glenrig, having each her respective domicile on a different outskirt of the two miles' distant village of Cushlake. Aunt MacAlister was a MacArthur, who had made a not very brilliant marriage, and who, having been left a widow, had returned, as it were, to the parent stem, and always prominently asserting herself as Randal MacArthur's sister thought she ought to hold her head very high, and did so accordingly. Now aunt Penelope was only the wife of a dead brother, and her family being, in aunt MacAlister's opinion, "very low," that good-natured sister-in-law thought she should, on her husband's decease, have modestly retired into her native obscurity. But in addition to the enormity of her declining to do this, she had succeeded in "worming herself" into the good graces of everybody at Glenrig, and this was a mortal offence to aunt MacAlister, whom nobody liked. And so "aunt Pen" and "aunt Mac" were always at dagger-points, something as may be a snarling terrier, ready to snap at every one's heels, and a purring cat who will lie cosily by the fire as long as she is left at peace, but will show the tiger when provoked.

It happened one evening, early in spring, that a small event occurred which, for a time, quickened mightily the blood in the drowsy Glenrig veins, and which, as it afterwards proved, was looked back upon as an epoch in the lives of all concerned. It was twilight, and Glenrig glared

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with all its red windows into the outer grayness, where the valley at its feet had assumed a mysterious depth, and the ranks of opposite mountains had retreated, in ghostly fashion, into the clouds. The great brown trees, their first awkward effort at greenness extinguished by the dusk, stood like bearded giants resting on their clubs, for a short truce had been concluded with the gales. Inside uncle Randal and aunt Janette were dozing, or musing, which you please, in their respective arm-chairs at either side of the hearth, and the firelight flushed over them, filling the cosy old-fashioned room with a deep crimson light. A light step came in, and Letitia crossed the floor hastily, crying, "Aunt Janette, here are the letters—the letters at last. One, two, three; and there's one from Archie. I'll light the lamp!"

The lamp was lit in a twinkling, and as Letitia stood in the sudden light we could not have a better opportunity for describing her. It was a slight, small figure, clothed in a housewifely gray dress, and black silk apron. She looked like one accustomed to carry the keys, but to carry them jauntily, making them as piquante an accessory to her own picturesqueness as any piece of *bijouterie* that ever fine lady hung on her finger or slung to her girdle. Letitia was not a beauty, but she could look pretty at times, and any woman who can do so should be content. It was a round face with intelligent eyes, rather amber than brown; a nose, short, and not ungraceful; a wide mouth with the merit of red lips and pure teeth; and a low broad forehead. Her hair, which was simply sombre, without either purple lights or ebon gloss, was folded smoothly from her brow, and hung in a heavy cloud about her throat. She did look pretty now, with a sudden jewel burning in each eye, and a throb of excitement reddening her cheek.

She sat down to read Archie's letter to his father and mother. She began heartily—"My dear mother——" She glanced down the page, and repeated mechanically, "My dear mother."

"Well, Letitia?"

"My eyes are dim, somehow," said Letitia. "I have got a headache. Just let me run up for Mary or Rachel. They will read it better."

And not waiting to be gainsayed, she sprang up and vanished.

"Rachel," she said, putting her head in at the door of a room upstairs where a young lady was arranging her hair at the glass, "there is a letter from Archie, and your mother wants you to read it for her. My head aches so badly, I cannot look at the paper."

Strange to say, the light on Rachel's table glared at Letitia like a bloodthirsty enemy, and Rachel herself, soft, quiet Rachel, looked a gorgon. Blissfully unconscious of this fact, however, that young lady made a moderate exclamation of pleasure at hearing of her brother's letter, and telling Letitia to bathe her head, went downstairs. And Rachel read the letter. It ran like this:—

My dear Mother,—I fear my father and you will be displeased at first when I tell you that I have been married for some time, but when you know my Ethelind you

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must forgive me. Knowing this, I have induced her to go on before me, on a visit to Glenrig. I have assured her of the affectionate welcome she will have. I need not ask you, dearest mother, to treat her tenderly for my sake. I hope Mary, Rachel, and Letitia will be sisters to her. I will join her at Glenrig in a few weeks hence. —Your affectionate son,

ARCHIBALD MACARTHUR.

Rachel let fall the paper, and blank amazement dropped down upon the listeners. Then sobbing and murmuring arose in a chorus of meek rebellion against fate and Archie, till Letitia presently brought her bright face back to the room, and laughing merrily at the "comical news" struck the key-note for a new strain, and set the weepers all chanting the praises of the dear offender, with only a low running accompaniment of regrets and fears, and gentle deprecations.

Some days passed, and it was the evening of the bride's expected arrival. The shock at Archie's strange conduct had in some measure subsided, and it had been resolved to give the visitor a true glens welcome. So the old house had been burnished up to its best looks, and early in the evening a goodly company of friends, all cousins to the nineteenth degree, had assembled in Mrs. MacArthur's drawing-room. The curtains were drawn across the shuttered windows, the fire blazed up the chimney, and the round table at the side of the room was absolutely groaning under delectable preparations for a plentiful tea. The room was filled with good-humoured, good-looking people, laughing and talking in the broad northern accent, which has so ludicrously little of the mincing about it, and so much of rough honest kindliness.

Old Randal MacArthur sat in his arm-chair as usual, a spare little man, with a thin rosy face, and a quick and kindly eye. He wore a black velvet cap on his almost bald head, and sat in the familiar attitude which betrayed his deafness, holding his hand behind his ear while he leaned upon the arm of his chair towards the company, looking from one face to the other as if he would guess by their expression, if he could not hear, all that was going forward.

His wife was in her customary place near to his side, with her small grave cap and small grave gown, and her thin timid face, looking like a rather stately little old maid in half-mourning. She also sat with her feet on a stool, and she wore her dress short, and large bright buckles on her shoes. Also on her shoulders a black velvet shawl, rich with fringe and embroidery, said to have cost a fabulous sum of money once upon a time: how long ago we cannot say, but aunt Penelope was wont to declare that sister Janette could not wear out her clothes like other folks, do as she would.

A small crowd of broad-shouldered, brown-faced cousin Edmunds, cousin Randals, cousin Pats, and cousin Archies straggled about a table where a group of young women sat at work. "Young women" aunt MacAlister resolutely dubbed them, and young women they were obliged to submit to be. Bead-work had not at the time we speak of quite superseded shirt-making and garter-knitting in retired nooks of the world like

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Glenrig; and of this laughing bevy, all busy with fingers and tongues, one was stitching a shirt-collar, another hemming damask napkins, whilst a third was netting—horrible to relate—a nightcap for her father. In this group were Mary and Rachel, the daughters of the house, with their low voices and few words. They were too quiet. Aunt Penelope once exclaimed in despair, "Sister Janette, can you do nothing to waken up these girls of yours? They're just no better than white mice!"

Aunt MacAlister betrayed her kill-joy propensities by her sharp eyes, long pinched nose, and puckered-up mouth. She was dressed in a black satin gown, very stiff, wore black silk mittens on her hands, and a severe Quaker-looking cap on her head. She was not perhaps, in the main, a bad-natured woman; but she always acted as though she lived in mortal dread lest any one should suspect that she possessed one drop of the milk of human kindness in her nature. She was particularly hard upon the "young women" now around her, calling their talk "clattering," and their ribbons and muslins "fudgey-magiggery." She had also a stab at the broad-shouldered cousins, whom she did not scruple to describe as "louts," telling of the elegant manners of the gentlemen whom she was accustomed to meet in Dublin, in her youth.

Aunt Penelope was an ample, plain-featured person, with no particular physical advantage beyond the beaming effulgence that could flood from her nondescript eyes, and irradiate her broad buff-coloured face. And we do not think aunt Mac need have called her vulgar because she preferred a brown and gold-colour brocaded gown to one of a more severely neutral description of tint; or, having been a widow for twenty years, because she liked a comfortable cap with a bit of colour about it. Be that as it may, aunt Pen was the favourite, the confidante, the coaxed and familiar of the whole clan. She knew all the secrets of the young men, and all the secrets of the young women, all but one. She was wont to declare to herself that she never could make anything of Letitia. Her eyes were now following that young damsel, as, dressed in black silk and a coral necklace, she flitted in and out and about the room, looking after the setting forth of cakes and preserves, and seeming to make a hundred excuses to keep moving about, as if she could not rest quiet a moment.

The rolling of a carriage was presently heard, and a crunching of wheels on the gravel. A sudden silence fell on the room. The cousins stopped laughing, Mary and Rachel glanced at one another, and looked more like white mice than ever; uncle Randal sank back in his chair; aunt Janette rose and stood nervously dragging the fringe of her shawl; aunt Mac bounced up and looked around as if to say, "Now we shall see what kind of person Mrs. Archie is?" Whereupon aunt Pen slipped into her chair, taking old Randal's hand kindly, and still watching Letitia. That young person, at the moment employed in cutting thin bread and butter, laid down her knife, and walking over to where Mrs. MacArthur stood irresolute on the hearth-rug, slipped the old lady's arm through her own and drew her on, saying, "Come, aunt Janette, you must meet her at

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the door, you know!" "Forward minx!" hissed aunt Mac, sotto voce. "Bravo, Letitia!" murmured aunt Pen under her breath.

In another minute the stranger stood under the hall lamp, and was embraced by aunt Janette. It was not noticed that when Letitia's turn came she retreated into the shadows, and pushed Mary forward to be kissed. Nor was it seen that when the visitor was conducted to her room, Letitia remained below on the mat, twisting her small fingers together, as if she would break them in pieces.

In due time Mrs. Archie made her appearance in the drawing-room, taking away every one's breath by her brilliance. She was dressed in bright blue silk, all flounces and trimmings, and wore delicate lace and glittering ornaments. She was slight, and tall, and carried her finery with a charming grace. She had that kind of fair-haired, fair-eyed good looks, which becoming dress and vivacity of character may burnish into fascinating beauty. If dressed in dull hues, and shorn of her little airs and graces, she would have been too pale and pink about the eyes, while her hair would have displayed that lack-lustre tint which can only be warmed to gold by delicate surroundings of colour. So at least thought aunt Penelope, as, quite forgetting politeness, she sat watching her with unflagging persistence, seeming to have quite overlooked Letitia in her new interest in the bride.

"Won't you come to the fire, Mrs. Archie?" "Mrs. Archie, won't you sit to the table for your tea?" "Mrs. Archie, dear, you're fairly done out!" "'Deed, Mrs. Archie, you're ready to drop this minute for want of something to eat. Oh! you needn't tell me. I know the hungry road you've travelled better than you do. You ought to be gey and keen for your tea!"

Such speeches as these assailed the new-comer on all sides; but after she had spoken once or twice, and shaken out her flounces as many times, the majority of the clan got rather more shy, and did not press their kindnesses on her so strongly: she was very condescending, very gracious, very lavish with her smiles and her pretty gestures; but somehow the plain glensfolk, with their quaint downright talk and their homely ways, felt ill at ease with her, feeling vaguely that she was rather too fine a lady for Archie to have sent home to Glenrig. Old Randal presently lay back, extinguished, in his chair. Aunt Janette by-and-by also retreated into retirement. Of the cousins, the male portion attended on her wants rather clumsily, and the female portion scrutinized her dress and the style of her hair.

Aunt Mac, who considered from the first that Mrs. Archie had "an air about her," made friends with her at once; perhaps because the bride evidently did not much affect aunt Penelope. And so she sat all evening by her side, and in return for Mrs. Archie's gracious information about "high circles" in London, aunt Mac entertained her with an account of the "elegant people" whom she used to meet "in Dublin, in her youth." And still aunt Penelope watched the bride, scrutinizing

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untiringly face, hands, figure, manner, and closing her eyes sometimes to listen more keenly to the tones of the stranger's voice.

"Sister Janette," said aunt Penelope, when the cousins were going away, "if you have a spare bed I'll stay. I have a mind not to go home to-night."

This was only aunt Penelope's way of putting it, for she knew there were plenty of spare beds at Glenrig; and she stayed.

At twelve o'clock that night Letitia was sitting at the fire in her own room, when aunt Penelope came in, shut the door, and stood beside her on the hearth. Now on this night of all others Letitia did not want even aunt Penelope in her room. Nevertheless, there she was.

"How do you like her?" aunt Pen began, poking up the fire briskly.

"Oh! well enough, I suppose!" replied Letitia. "She's a very grand lady indeed."

"Isn't she a beauty now? Did you ever see as pretty a creature?"

"She's good-looking enough!" said Letitia dryly, "but I can't say I admire her much."

Aunt Penelope looked at her with twinkling eyes. "What makes you so cross to-night, Letitia?"

"Cross! I cross? I'm not cross, aunt Penelope!"

"Well, you're something very like it. However, I'm not going to torment you, you close little thing! I suppose if I said you 'poor' little thing you'd tear my eyes out. There, sit still! Letitia, do you remember Bessie Anderson?"

"Bessie! Bessie, who used to play with me long ago?"

"Yes, that very Bessie. Do you remember her?"

"Of course I do."

"How old were you when she went away?"

"About nine, I think."

"And she was three years older. That is ten years ago. Do you recollect why she was sent away from this?"

"Not very well. For some bad conduct, I think."

"It was for forging a letter," said aunt Penelope—"a letter from her schoolmaster to aunt Janette, asking for the loan of some money, which she, Miss Bessie, having got to bring to him, expended on sweetmeats. Tell me now, Letitia, what was she like, as you remember her?"

"Why, of course, I don't recollect her very distinctly, but I know she was a pale girl with fair hair. But, dear me! aunt Penelope, you must remember all about her yourself a great deal better than I can. What has put her in your head to-night?"

"Hold your tongue, my dear, and never mind, but go to bed and rest your poor little worried brains. Your wits aren't so bright these days, Letitia, as they used to be: but you can't help that, poor lamb. There, good night!"

And giving her a hearty kiss, aunt Pen walked off to her own chamber. There she doffed her glowing cap and put on her night-cap;

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but having got thus far in her preparations for her couch, she rolled herself up in a great shawl, and taking her candle in hand, went straight downstairs again to the dining-room, not the drawing-room. This dining-room was situated at the extreme end of the hall, and attained by a low flight of steps and a landing. It was a long room, with high wainscots and red hangings. Here she coolly lit the lamp, and ensconcing herself in an arm-chair at the table, deliberately began to read. The fire had gone out, but aunt Penelope had provided herself with a shawl.

She sat for about an hour or more, now and again looking at her watch, and glancing towards the door. After two o'clock had struck, and she had begun to shift about uneasily in her chair, the door softly opened, and Mrs. Archie appeared with a candle in her hand. She was in a white dressing-gown, with her hair twisted up for the night, and her looks at this moment justified aunt Penelope's preconceived opinion, that shorn of the becoming blue of her dress, the glitter of her ornaments, and the sparkle of her gaiety, the fair "Ethelind" would be a "common-enough" looking person!

"Goodness gracious, Mrs. Archie!" exclaimed aunt Penelope, putting down her book; "what has scared ye? I thought you'd have been sound asleep two hours ago, after your journey!"

Mrs. Archie was profuse in her explanations. She had been looking for the drawing-room, having left her reticule there. She had such a terrific headache, she could not sleep. Her smelling-salts, which always relieved her, were in the reticule. She begged pardon of aunt Penelope, whose delightful studies, no doubt, rewarded her for a loss of sleep, &c. &c.

Mrs. Archie hastily withdrew. Then aunt Pen pushed away her book, gathered her shawl round her, and got up with her candle. But before she left the room she walked round the walls, passing her hand over the wainscot at intervals, and sometimes peering into the cracks and lines with the candle close to the wood. After this inspection she shook her head warily, smiled to herself, and went off to her room.

Next morning, to the dismay of many present, aunt Mac made her appearance at the breakfast-table. On the night before she had just been mounting the steps of her "inside car" ("aunt Mac's shanderadan," some sly cousin had been known to call it), when the echo of aunt Pen's announcement to stay the night reached her preternaturally sharp ears. She had at once descended, and, re-entering the house, had informed aunt Janette that the air was so keen she feared a return of toothache, from which she had suffered so much ten years ago. She would, therefore, inhabit a second of the Glenrig spare bed-rooms for the night.

"It was a clever stroke of Mrs. Pen!" soliloquized she, as she betook herself to her chamber. "A clever stroke, but she forgets that she has Sabina MacAlister to deal with." It was a good idea to try and get the start of me in that way, but I'll let her see that I mean to keep my ground

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with Mrs. Archie, who is a very superior person, and, I am sure, despises her wheedling ways!" Whilst kept waking by the energy of these valiant resolves, aunt Mac had heard a step in the passage, and peeping from her door had been just in time to see the top of aunt Penelope's nightcap disappearing down the stairs. This little circumstance had added a tinge of mystery to aunt Pen's audacious conduct; and at the end of the two hours which had elapsed before her step ascended the stair again, aunt Mac had been in a perfect frenzy of curiosity.

However, in the morning there was aunt Penelope punctual at the early breakfast-table, as fresh and as pleasant as a very large and fully blown cabbage rose, and quite unimpressed by aunt Mac's extra austere glances, and the extra acid tones of aunt Mac's voice. The day proved wet, and in the drawing-room uncle Randal had his paper, whilst aunt Janette studied a book called *Christian Perfection* in the opposite armchair. Mary and Rachel sat at their work-table, and each uttered half-a-dozen phrases between breakfast and dinner. Mrs. Archie, after delighting aunt Mac for an hour with her elegant conversation, had produced a novel, and ensconced herself comfortably in a sofa, with her becoming drapery swelling in silken billows around her. Letitia had found so much to do elsewhere that she could not contrive to make herself visible in the drawing-room for more than five minutes at a time. And so the two aunts sat opposite to one another, each engaged in knitting, aunt Mac with thin needles of cold blue steel, and aunt Pen with large comfortable wooden ones, with sealing-wax heads, which she bestowed away under her arms, while she plied her work with many a click and clack.

During the course of the day Mrs. Archie chanced to lay down her novel and go out of the room. A few minutes afterwards aunt Penelope wound up her ball, and fastened it into its little basket, with the hole for the cotton to run through, stuck her needles into her work, and also left the room.

"I was thinking, Mrs. Archie," she said, entering the dining-room, "that you'd be, maybe, writing a line to your good man; and as I've a letter to send to the post myself, the same messenger could take yours and mine to Cushlake together."

Mrs. Archie, who was deeply engaged in studying the pictures on the wall, said, "Oh, thank you; I will write it at once!" and tripped off to her own room.

"Rather queer," mused aunt Pen as she marched round by the wainscot again, like a general reviewing the strength of his batteries. "Rather queer for a young bride to need to be reminded of writing to her husband by an old wife like me!"

"I have left it on the hall-table," said Mrs. Archie, fluttering into the drawing-room.

And aunt Pen went off to deposit her own letter beside the bride's. She lifted up Mrs. Archie's dainty little note, and surveyed it back and front, and read the direction over at least twenty times—

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"Archibald MacArthur," it ran, "19, Butterfly Terrace, Brompton, London, S.W."

Well, Mrs. Penelope, and what is there so strange about that? Is it not your nephew's correct address, the address of his lodging where he exists during the intervals between his periods of living interment in the Temple? Oh, yes, Mrs. Penelope says, but that is precisely what puzzles me! Then she takes a letter from her pocket—Archie's letter to his mother—and spreads it out upon the table, and peers into the writing, and then again into that on the envelope addressed by the fair Ethelind. Never was there a prettier contrast. One, bold, clear, a little rugged, with here and there a mischievous curve curling up like a laugh; very suggestive of Archie. The other, fine, weak, slanting, pretty—just the handwriting for a dainty, fair-complexioned bride, who reads novels, and wears blue silk and laces. The result of aunt Pen's inspection is a twinkle of the eyes, and she goes back to her knitting.

"Now what is she plotting and planning?" ejaculated aunt MacAlister that night, when she found herself in her own room. "She keeps coming and going, and smiling to herself, and her eyes keep twinkling while she rattles those great coarse vulgar needles of hers! And she keeps watching that sweet, elegant creature, just as a cat does a mouse. And no one sees it—oh, dear, no! Randal might be blind as well as deaf, and as for Janette, she's as ignorant as a baby of everything but the Lives of the Saints and Randal's ailments.

Soliloquizing thus at a late hour, aunt Mac, who had purposely left her door ajar, heard aunt Pen's soft step going past again, as on the night before. She at once got up, and shaking with hurry and overflowing with curiosity, dressed and went downstairs. After trying several dark rooms, she at last made her way to the dining-room, where she was so astounded at seeing aunt Penelope and Mrs. Archie together, that she sank into a chair with a little spasmodic shriek. Whereupon aunt Penelope turned from the table where she was standing, closed the door softly, and said pleasantly—

"Keep quiet, if you please, aunt Mac. Mrs. Archie and I are just looking for a reticule of hers that she's apt to mislay of nights. But there's no need to wake up the house about it. I think, Mrs. Archie, we'll give it up for to-night."

The bride was standing near the wainscot with her candle on a chair beside her. She looked pale and cross as she took her light and prepared to go.

"Mistress Penelope!" burst forth aunt Mac, "I don't pretend to know why you think proper to walk about the house at nights scaring quiet people in their beds. Of course it's nothing to me—I'm nobody—but I wonder you're not ashamed to rout up a young creature like that—a guest in the house—a—a——" Here aunt Mac choked with anger for a moment. "Mrs. Archie," she went on, very politely, "will you do me the favour of leaning on my arm, and allowing me to conduct you to your

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chamber? As I'm a MacArthur myself, I may speak for my brother in my brother's house. I am distressed that your slumbers should have been so intruded upon."

This was no doubt the style of diction indulged in by aunt Mac, "in Dublin in her youth." Mrs. Archie graciously and timidly accepted her protection, and aunt Pen was left smiling at her candle in the dining-room alone.

"I do positively think," said aunt Mac, as she prepared a second time for rest, "I do believe that foolish, superstitious woman has begun again to her old nonsense about that treasure. Treasure, indeed! As if wiser than she is would not have found it long ago if it had been there! As if the MacArthurs themselves did not know their own affairs best! Oh, that's what she's plotting and planning about! And I'll stake my head that she's trying to coax or worry that nice Mrs. Archie into her clutches. She wants her help in some way or other. Perhaps to use her influence with Archie to get the house pulled down. What else could have brought her below these two nights and Mrs. Archie with her? But trust a real MacArthur for finding out her plots! Oh, I'll stake my head upon it!"

What, aunt Mac! with the rigid cap, and the MacArthur nose, and the fine plaited front and all? Take care, aunt Mac. And yet she would have been willing to stake her hands in addition, if she could have seen aunt Penelope at that moment, as she stood smiling over a sharp instrument with a handle, which she had found among the chairs near where Mrs. Archie had stood, close by the wainscot.

II.

Another day arrived, and neither of the aunts made any sign of returning to her town residence at Cushlake; aunt Pen stayed and aunt Mac stayed.

"Oh! I certainly expect a letter to-day," warbled Mrs. Archie, in answer to a query put by some one at the breakfast-table.

Aunt Pen was not much in the drawing-room that morning, and it chanced that she got the letter-bag first, and carried it with her to her own room. Arrived there, we are afraid the reader will be shocked to learn her next proceeding. Having found a letter addressed in her nephew's writing to "Mrs. Archibald MacArthur, Glenrig, Cushlake, co. Antrim," she held it over a dish of hot water, and opened it easily. She then took out the enclosure and read it. Having done so, a smile overspread aunt Penelope's round face—a smile so broad, that some people, seeing it, would have concluded that a crown, or a fortune at least, had been laid at her feet. Having finished reading, she coolly locked up the letter in a box, and folding a sheet of blank paper placed it in the envelope. Then she sat down and wrote a letter, addressed to the Temple, London, which she carried away and sent off to Cushlake to the post; and after completing all these arrangements, she introduced the letter-bag to the drawing-room.

Mrs. Archie retired to her own room to read her letter. On her

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return, aunt Penelope hoped her nephew Archie was very well. "Oh, yes!" Ethelind assured her, as she nestled among her flounces again with her novel. "Oh, yes, very well, very well indeed!"

"Archie is beginning to write a great deal better than he did," remarked Rachel, taking up the envelope which Mrs. Archie had left ostentatiously upon the table. "This is not so hurried as he used to write; it is very nice and fine." The bride's cheeks grew a shade pinker, and aunt Penelope smiled, but no one answered Rachel's observation.

Three nights passed, during which Mrs. Archie never once had occasion to come down searching for her reticule after twelve o'clock, and the two aunts were suffered to skirmish about the house in their nightcaps, and come in collision with their candles in dark rooms to their hearts' content. But on the fourth night, when aunt Pen was in the act of screwing up her curl-papers, she heard a 'click' at her door, and discovered that she was locked into her room. Finding this, she sat down upon the nearest chair and indulged in a hearty fit of laughter. "Well done!" she ejaculated, wiping her eyes, "very well done indeed! You're a cleverer woman, my dear Mrs. Archie, than even I gave you credit for!"

Aunt MacAlister, who also found her door locked, was not so amiable over the discovery, but fumed about her room in a fury at the impudence, the audacity, the cunning of that low-bred woman. But she would be even with her, she vowed she would. She would bide her time and outwit her in the end. She would have a second key to fit her door, and the next night would walk down to her in the midst of her secret doings. And when at last aunt Mac consoled herself with her pillow she dreamed of aunt Penelope dressed as an Italian peasant, and covered with jewels, riding off from Glenrig attended by a company of brigands, each of whom carried a coffer of gold before him on his saddle. And it would be using much too weak an expression to say that aunt Mac looked daggers at aunt Pen at the breakfast-table next morning. Spears and javelins convey but a faint idea of the cutting intensity of glance with which she favoured her.

That day, in passing down the hall, aunt Penelope observed a second of those pretty missives addressed to Butterfly Terrace, Brompton, lying conspicuously on the hall table. And now shudder again, virtuous reader, for this wicked aunt Pen took the note and put it in her pocket. Afterwards she read it in her own room, and it never left Glenrig. On returning to the drawing-room after this exploit she found that Mrs. Archie had had another letter from her husband, in which he stated that he found it impossible to go to Glenrig for a considerable time, and wished her to return at once to London. They could pay a good visit together during the long vacation; he must defer it till then; and Mrs. Archie, like a leal and loving wife, was most anxious to depart without delay, although with overwhelming regret, and gratitude for her delightful, if short, sojourn in the home of her dear husband. Aunt Pen, entering the room, sat down quietly anchored in the midst of the little storm of mild dismay and persuasion which had arisen after Mrs. Archie's announcement of her lord's

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behest, and her own resolve. Aunt MacAlister was strong in deprecation, condemning her nephew loudly; and uncle Randal and aunt Janette, though they loved not their fine daughter-in-law, tried for the sake of their worshipped son, to make believe to their own kindly hearts that they were sorry to lose her. Mary and Rachel said nothing, but then that was their more usual mode of expressing their feelings.

"Well, well, Penelope," said mild little Mrs. Janette, "it's very lucky, as she is resolved to go, that we have asked our friends to come to-night. We'll give her one glens dance before she goes."

To this aunt Penelope nodded and smiled acquiescence over her knitting. And Mrs. Archie writhed uneasily on her sofa, and watched aunt Pen intently out of her pale blue-green eyes from behind her novel. And still aunt Pen sat in the window counting her stitches, with her eyes puckered up in the sun, and her cheeks broad with content and good humour. And after that Mrs. Archie did not appear much in the drawing-room that day, being occupied upstairs in packing her trunks, and preparing her dress for the evening.

For there was to be a party at Glenrig that night. Not the kind of country ball where the dancing commences at eleven, and a professional musician comes down by train from the nearest important town to play the polkas and mazurkas; but a species of old-fashioned country party, where the matrons come in their good well-kept silks and satins of decent make, and wear caps which they bring tenderly pinned up in their lace pocket-handkerchiefs; where a young lady may consider herself full-dressed in a high white muslin with a rose in her hair, and her partner for the first dance hands her the seed-cake from the round table, where tea is being made for the company; and where the old ladies regale themselves over their gossip in the corner with hot sally-lun, and send back their cups for a little more sugar.

Evening arrived, and the drawing-room was filled early with a right merry company. The girls tied their sandals and smoothed out their sashes up in aunt Janette's room, and then came down in groups to the drawing-room, and the old ladies nodded their heads together for a few minutes after they had pinned on their caps, and then followed them. And the young men placed chairs for the young ladies, and hoped they had enjoyed their drive, and had not caught cold; hoped that Miss Annie's parcel came all right by the postman, and that cousin Kate found the ribbon chosen in town the other day of the right shade. And Mary and Rachel looked very nice with their white shoulders peeping out of their lilac silks, and Letitia made tea as usual in her white muslin and favourite coral necklace. Her face was fairer and her hair cloudier than they used to appear, and her wide-awake amber eyes seemed to have got darker settings than they had a month ago. But some one speaks, and the colour runs red over her cheek, and she laughs a gay laugh. The child who runs to put salt on a bird's tail is as wise as the person who ever expected to find Letitia sentimentalizing. And Mrs. Archie

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comes in, in a cloud of blue crape spangled with silver, and with pearls twisted in her fair ringlets, and the country girls in their simple attire gaze at her in a maze of admiration as she floats into a chair and consents to be helped to a cup of tea.

And now the fun begins and is carried on with great spirit, Letitia dancing more blithely than anybody, only detected once by aunt Pen in a tired far-away look of the eyes. But who deserved blame for that? Aunt Penelope need not be always watching somebody! And indeed aunt Pen herself did not escape without criticism that night, for aunt Mac never forgave her for the country dance in which she had the bad taste to join. A woman come to her time of life. Faugh! it was too ridiculous!

The evening sped and the supper came, carried in on trays, and handed about like the tea. And after Mrs. Archie had eaten her supper, she changed her seat, once, twice, thrice, getting nearer the door each time, on account of the heat, and at last slipped out of the room whilst aunt Pen was discussing the wing of a chicken and lending a sympathizing ear to the tale of domestic woes poured therein by a neighbour whose servant had had the unheard-of audacity to get married. "And there she walked out on Sunday morning as brazen as you please, and came home with a ring on her finger!" Aunt Pen waited till her wing, and her duties of consoler, were finished, and then, sending away her plate, shook a crumb from the brown and gold-colour brocade, and left the drawing-room.

The hall was alight, but the dining-room at its extreme end had been left in forgotten darkness. Thither aunt Pen turned her steps, taking no light. On entering softly, she perceived a square vista of brightness, whose rays streamed from the most distant wainscot. She crept very noiselessly round the dark walls to the spot, and caught a glimpse of the fair Ethelind down on her knees before something like a trunk, in what seemed a small closet or passage, running behind the wainscot. She was hurrying madly over the contents of the chest, or whatever receptacle it might be, and aunt Pen could hear her enraged panting whispers, as she tossed about the mouldy contents, evidently finding only disappointment in her search.

"Nothing, after all!" she groaned; "nothing but an old cake-basket, two salt-cellars, and a trumpery old yellow satin gown!"

Aunt Penelope, shaking with laughter, stretched out her hand, and slid the panel into its place, closing the aperture from without.

And away went this cruel aunt Pen, closing the dining-room door as she came out. "Nicely caged at last," she said; "and now, if Archie does not fail me, he'll be here in a few minutes!"

What with the dancing and talking, no one in the drawing-room heard the arrival of a conveyance at the door; and when "Mr. Archie, God bless his handsome face!" invaded the hall, with his rugs and scarfs and portmanteau, Bridget forgot all propriety, clapped her hands, and was

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rushing off to the drawing-room with the news. But Archie said, "Don't interrupt the dancing, Bridget. I'm glad to see that nothing is wrong. I'll go up and get rid of these things, and then surprise them. Get me a light."

And so, to aunt Pen's infinite satisfaction, and the bewilderment of every one else, the door opened in the middle of a dance, and lawyer Archie walked in. Rather a cheer than a murmur of welcome filled the room, and aunt Janette forgot herself so far as to fall into her son's arms in presence of her guests.

"Upon my word, this is very pleasant," said Archie, after the greetings were over and he had sat down by his father's chair and surveyed the company, rather restlessly, as if searching for some face not yet visible. "Very pleasant to see so many friends all together on one's arrival home."

"But you don't ask for your wife, nephew Archie," said aunt Pen, slyly.

"For whom?" asked Archie, turning a blank face upon her.

"Your wife."

"Oh, come, aunt Pen, you're as bad as ever I see! Well, we'll have it out by-and-by."

"I am quite in earnest, nephew Archie. I say, why don't you ask for your wife?"

"Yes, certainly, your wife," said old Randal.

"Oh, yes, Archie dear, your wife, you know!" said aunt Janette, looking nervously in her son's face. Archie's puzzled eyes scanned the groups of inquiring faces around him. He began to think he was the victim of some joke in which all present were leagued against him. Aunt Pen came to the rescue.

"Look here, now," she said; "Archie, did you write that letter?"

Letitia all this time had been standing invisible behind a curtain, drumming with her fingers on the window-shutter. She stopped drumming.

Archie took the letter which aunt Pen gave him, and looked it over. Then he laughed, once, twice, and again, and again, so gaily, with such a genuine ring, that every one joined perforce. "No, I'll swear I never did!" he said, as soon as he could find his voice.

"But is it not your writing?"

"Faith, it's uncommonly like it. At least it's very like what I might write if I were on my good behaviour."

"Well, then," said aunt Pen, who seemed to have taken upon her the duty of spokeswoman for the family, "our reasons for believing you to have a wife are, firstly, that precious epistle in your hand; secondly, the arrival of the lady; and, thirdly, your regular letters to her since she came, and hers to you."

Archie extended his left hand. "Will any of you gentlemen be kind enough to give me a pinch?"

"Of snuff?" asked a stout little gentleman, producing his box. No, Archie said, laughing, but a pinch on his flesh, to assure him that he was awake. After some one had performed that kind office for him, Archie

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proceeded to make a speech, which, being quite in his way, it is to be supposed he found no difficulty in doing.

"I beg to state," he said, "to this good company, that I am not married, nor did I ever make the acquaintance of any lady rejoicing in the romantic name of 'Ethelind.' I now understand why aunt Penelope wrote off to me to come home in such a hurry that I concluded you must be all dead, or the house have fallen at least; and also, I suppose, why she was so urgent to know all particulars of my habit as to the posting of my letters home; and also as much as possible about the servants at my lodging in Brompton. If it will throw any light on this affair, I will state that it has been my custom to write my letters for Glenrig during the evening at Brompton, and to leave them on the table for the servant; for whose sake I had been led to understand an obliging milkman took them away and posted them early in the morning. Of the servants I can tell very little. The maid who attended upon me until about a month ago was a rather nice-looking, fair-haired girl; but I did not like her much, as I suspected her more than once of meddling with my loose papers. She left, and another came in her place, a quiet-looking young woman, of whom I had never any reason to complain. It was rather strange, however, that when I told her, the night before last, that I should start for Ireland in the morning, and must be wakened early, she dropped my slippers in a panic and ran out of the room. And the next morning, as I was leaving, my landlady was in great trouble, as it seemed Sarah had left the house suddenly, and not returned."

"The best thing she could do, I think!" said aunt Pen. And then she, on her side, proceeded to make a speech, in which she triumphantly informed the company, with many a laughing pause, and many an energetic nod of her brilliant cap, of how she had, from the first, recognized in the would-be Mrs. Archie her former protégée, Bessie Anderson, the grandchild of old Nannie, who knew the secret hiding-place of the supposed treasure; and how, recollecting the grandmother's boast, and Bessie's cleverness and covetous disposition, she had found no difficulty in arriving at the motive of the hoax; also that on calling to mind the fact that Bessie had been sent from Glenrig in disgrace ten years ago for cleverly forging a letter, she had hardly been surprised at the successful deception she had been enabled to attempt. Then she recounted her nightly adventures with the fair "Ethelind," and lastly proceeded to read aloud two letters. This was the first:—

Dear Bessie,—All is well here. A. M. is going on as usual. I received your letter, and I burned it as agreed. I got a letter to post from A. M. to his mother, and burned it also, as agreed. I hope all is going well. Don't forget to send me the envelopes. Old S—— is getting cross about her money.—Your faithful friend,

Sarah Green.

A chorus of exclamations hailed this letter. Aunt Mac was by this time growing very white and blue in the face. Archie was in agonies of

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laughter; uncle Randal was listening with all his might; aunt Janette was in a hopeless maze of bewilderment; Mary and Rachel were trying to understand; Letitia was still invisible. Aunt Pen proceeded with the next letter.

DEAR SARAH,—Why did you send me a sheet of blank paper? You know I am *so anxious* for news. *Write quickly* and tell me what is going on. The two old aunts are still here and very troublesome. I did not count on having *them* to deal with. One of them goes spying about the house at night, and I know she suspects me. The other one watches *her* as well as *she* watches *me*. I have *found* the *place*, however, and will search it whenever I can. I locked up the two old aunts the other night, and had the field to myself. One of the panels in the end wall of the dining-room *slides back*, as granny said. I must try and get out of this as soon as I can. I can't tell yet what I shall have with me. I enclose the envelopes. Use the most *carelessly written* one first. Be sure you *watch well*, and don't forget to *burn this*.

BESSIE ANDERSON.

"I, being the suspicious old aunt," said aunt Pen, folding the paper with mock solemnity, "stole these letters, and inside the last I found these envelopes, enclosed all ready for the purpose of covering the epistles received by Miss Bessie from her disinterested friend, Miss Green. This evening I gave her a hint of my nephew's expected arrival here before to-morrow night, and I think it has hastened her movements a little. And now, I believe, we have nearly got to the bottom of it."

Here aunt Mac, having probably got a return of that toothache from which she had suffered so much ten years ago, got up and left the room. And after the shrieks of laughter, which had rung through the drawing-room, had somewhat subsided, aunt Pen went off to free the fair "Ethelind" from her captivity. But lo! the bird had flown! On discovering which fact, aunt Pen looked neither surprised nor displeased. The blue crape dress and many other articles (value for old S—'s money, possibly) were afterwards found in her room, but "Mrs. Archie" was never seen again by any of the inhabitants of Glenrig. A merry country-dance concluded the evening, Letitia and Archie leading off; and aunt Mac having departed in her "shanderadan," aunt Penelope ventured to join. We have only now to add that on the next day, Letitia, creeping into the wonderful closet to see what manner of place it might be, laughingly dragged forth the old yellow satin gown. It was very heavy and thick, and being ripped up, proved to be filled, between the lining and the satin, with a quantity of old-fashioned jewels of valuable description, and goodly guineas to a large amount.

A slab in Cushlake church covers good old uncle Randal—"Also Janette his wife." The two aunts, their "warfare o'er," sleep soundly hard by. Mary and Rachel have grown-up sons and daughters. And Letitia and Archie, when they come to Glenrig for the summer, tell their children the merry story of that clever Bessie who gave them so merry a laugh, and found for them the wonderful hidden closet.

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Primitive Language.

The claims of different communities to speak the primeval language—the language of Adam and Eve in Paradise—give amusing evidence of pride and ignorance. Among the nations who recognize the authority of the Bible (though the book says nothing on the subject), Hebrew is generally believed to have the highest pretensions to antiquity; but many of the Welsh and the Biscayan writers have been persistent in asserting for the Cambrian and the Euscara the honour of being the *fons et origo* of all other tongues. The latest claim has been put forward for the Hawaiian, or the language of the Sandwich Islands, as being that from which the venerable Sanscrit and all its descendants are derived.*

The Hawaiian has the attraction of presenting the very simplest elements as regards sounds; the smallest number of consonants possessed by any known tongue, namely, seven; its vowels, the ordinary five, pronounced with only the modification of a longer or shorter utterance, the vowel sounds greatly preponderating; there is no combination of consonants whatever without the intervention of a vowel, and every word has a vowel termination. That such a tongue must be spoken with great facility, is very obvious; that it can have no very considerable variety of syllables, is equally so; and that it should be characterized by frequent repetitions of the same syllables is a necessity imposed by the paucity and poverty of its elementary character. Distinctness of enunciation is not, however, the result of this simplicity; and the variety of names given by navigators to Hawaiian persons, places, and things, shows that the native words had to the ears of strangers an imperfect utterance. The Hawaiians have no *r*, yet the elongated *a* is often written *ar*; *l* and *r* are scarcely distinguishable; so the capital is sometimes written Honolulu, sometimes Honururu.

Such a language must have had its birth in a rude civilization. It sufficed for the simple wants of an aboriginal population, for the interchange of thoughts that were few, and for the naming of objects confined to the produce of the same soil and the same climate. Science there was none, and it demanded no form of expression. The administration of justice was simple, the rights of persons and property somewhat vaguely recognized or understood; so that *law* itself would but be represented by a phraseology connected less with reason or equity than with long

* "I believe it will be found that all those tongues which we designate as the Indo-European languages have their true root and origin in the Polynesian language. I am certain this is the case as regards the Greek and Sanscrit. I find reason to believe it to be so as to the Latin and other more modern tongues—in short, as to all European languages, old and young."—*Dr. T. Rae on the Polynesian Languages.* Hana Mani, 1862.

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usage and recognized power. In the field of ethics still less would be the clear distinctions between right and wrong—between vices and virtues. And so, of course, in the higher regions of intellect. Who could give to a savage any correct notion of what we mean by *Philosophy* in the abstract, or by any of its practical branches, moral or physical? What creates and enriches language is intercourse with others—commercial intercourse more than any other, and especially intercourse with superior races. To this may be traced the resemblance which exists between the *numerals* even of remote nations. These were necessary to the commonest operations of barter, and may be traced from country to country, accompanying the merchant adventurer on his way. But without intercourse there will be found to be few affinities of language; probably, none whatever where evidence exists of absolute isolation, and the ethnological type is without resemblance to any other.

Naturally enough, refined distinctions are not to be found in the scanty nomenclature of rude nations. Many ideas which are clear to the instructed, and for which they easily find expression, are confused to the mind of the savage, and confused conception necessitates imperfect expression. There are tribes that cannot count the first five numbers, who represent two by repeating one and one, and who have a single word for many or multitude—such as stars, sands, or leaves. In the Hawaiian language there are only six words for colours: there is no distinction between black, blue, and deep green; between bright yellow and white; between red and brown. Words for white and black, dark and light, the green of earth and the blue of heaven, will everywhere be found. To express what is round and what is square, words are not wanting; but for the many less marked varieties of shape, words would be sought in vain.

When, for physical and tangible objects, the vocabulary is scant, it will be still more wanting in words which convey the mental emotions. In the Hawaiian language, all the friendly affections—love, sympathy, gratitude, esteem, kindness, benevolence, tenderness—have a single representative in the word *Aloha;* a word so resembling the hailing of our mariners (holla, halo!) that we find it stated in the Hawaiian annals that the sailors who accompanied Captain Cook often uttered "Aloha, aloha!" to which a friendly interpretation was immediately given by the natives. The more vehement passions, such as hate and anger, have a greater variety of expression. *Huhu*, the word for rage, literally means *swell, swell;* as we say swelling, bursting with passion.

Resemblances between vowel utterances, in different languages, for the same object, do little to prove their origin from the same source. For an object so universal as *water*, the sounds *a*, *o*, *e*, *i*, and *u*, will be found employed in different parts of the world. The simplest sounds will generally be used to represent the most common objects. A novelty introduced will in most cases necessitate a combination, unless the object indicated bring with it its foreign name.

To the influence of *Asia*, modifications of the normal tongues of the

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ancient world are principally to be traced. And this is quite natural, considering the advanced civilization of many of the Oriental races, their migratory habits, the comparative profuseness of their idioms, so fitted to enrich the dialects of less advanced peoples. And it may be observed that, of the most extended of the Asiatic tongues—that of the Chinese, who were not a wandering people—scarcely a word is to be found in the vocabularies of the West. The monosyllabic roots of the Sanscrit may be traced in the great divisions of Celtic, Gothic, and Sclavonic languages; but of the *Hwan-hwa*, the classic speech of China, it is believed that scarcely a single word has made its way to the vocabularies of civilization; except, as in the case of *Tea*, *Cha*, *Tchai*, where the article represented is exclusively of Chinese growth.

If in Asia the sources are to be sought of the ramifications of many languages, we may also regard it as the field where languages were fused of a higher antiquity than are preserved in any existing records. The history of language is involved in darkness, like the history of man; but language must in all times have represented the civilization with which it was associated—decaying with decaying peoples, progressing and improving wherever the human race progressed or improved.

The farther we remove from Central Asia, the fewer will be the affinities found with Asian tongues—an evident proof that the language of those remote regions *had not* a common origin; for, if they had such an origin, they would be less changed than those from whence, by the advocates of a single primitive tongue, they are supposed to be derived. The idiom most nearly resembling the ancient Latin is not that now spoken in Italy or Spain, for Italian and Spanish have been created out of the influence of many invasions, which have modified the language of Virgil and Tacitus; while in the distant *Dacia*, the Wallachian, as spoken at the present hour, bears a near resemblance to the idiom used in the days of Imperial Rome. A Roman of the first century would be better understood in Bucharest than in Bologna. An ancient Scandinavian would more easily hold intercourse with a modern Icelander from Reykjavík than with a Dane or Swede from Copenhagen or Stockholm; but neither Goth, Scandinavian, nor Saxon, would be intelligible to those who speak our modern English tongue.

In languages, as in races, the law of progress prevails. What is imperfect perishes. The strong, the intellectual, supersede the barbarous and the weak. No dialectic of antiquity can compare in strength and variety with those which represent modern civilization. The English probably contains twenty thousand words for which no synonymes could be found in the classical tongues; and it may be doubted whether an inhabitant of ancient Athens or Rome would understand many of the adaptations from Greek and Latin, of which modern science has availed itself.

All rude languages have vowel terminations alone; and it may be asked whether, in any language, any word can be pronounced, however it

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may be written, without a vowel termination; for a vowel is but an outbreaking and releasing of the breath; and the more mechanical opening of the mouth after the formation of a consonant necessarily gives a more or less distinguishable vowel sound. In the Italian, as written, almost every word ends with a vowel; the few exceptions, as *il*, *al*, *ed*, are really pronounced *il-e*, *al-e*, *ed-e*. In the primary schools of Holland the alphabet is invariably taught by post-fixing instead of prefixing the vowel to the consonant sound. Instead of *ef* for f, they use *fe*; not *el* (l), but *le*; not *em* (m), but *me*; not *en* (n), but *ne*; *re*, not *er* (r); *se*, not *es* (s); *xe* (x), not *ex*; and by this means reading is wonderfully facilitated. What can be more perplexing than the teaching an English child to spell *cat*, calling the first letter *see*, and making *see-a-t*, instead of *ke-a-t*, out of the three letters. To a Dutch child the teacher would say *ke-a-t*, and the word is but a rapid sequence of the sounds represented by the letters.

The difficulty of ending every word with a consonant will be discovered if an attempt be made to pronounce the first two letters of the alphabet, *ab*. This cannot be done without a strong effort to dwell upon the *b*, so as to prevent the sudden exhalation of the breath, which is in itself a vowel sound. The utterance of the vowel can only be prevented by the inhalation and absorption of the breath in the throat. A child can, with difficulty, be taught to say *ab*. It will relieve itself by opening its mouth, which will give *aba*, *abe*, *abi*, *abo*, *abu*, as may be; or a vowel sound so vague as scarcely to be distinguishable, but still a vowel sound.

The number of distinct vowel sounds is only three—*a*, produced by the widest opening of the mouth; *u*, the narrowest; and *i*, the middle. *E* is but a combination of *a* and *i*, *o* of *a* and *u*; they are, in fact, diphthongal vowels. Wherever *ai* or *au* occur in English words, they are pronounced like the long *e* and *o* of the Italian and most other continental languages. There can be no doubt that the *kai* of the Greeks, the *que* of the Latins, and the *che* of the Tuscan represent the same sound. The ancient pronunciation of Cæsar (*kaiser*) is preserved by the Germans. The soft *c* of the Italians, and, indeed, of many modern tongues, is but a false orthography.

In a language where vowels prevail, as they prevail in the Hawaiian, the consonants, though few in number, have often an indistinctness in pronunciation not known to languages of more complicated construction. This indistinctness creates difficulties in tracing analogies in words that may have emanated from the same source. But in languages possessing only a few syllabic forms analogies and resemblances must be many from the necessities of the case, the whole vocabulary being so small; so that the same word will have many meanings.* In monosyllabic tongues, this is a defect obviously more remarkable than in polysyllabic ones. The

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* *Umi*, in Hawaiian, means rat-trap, the numeral ten, infanticide, and, when repeated (*umi umi*), a man's beard. I have seen an attempt made to show some affinity between these four objects. In China, the word *I* has at least sixty significations; the word *chin*, about half as many.

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Chinese diminish, but cannot remove the difficulty, by different intonations, by shortening or lengthening the sound, or by a raising or falling of the voice, or by combinations of different sounds having the same, or nearly the same, meaning; for example, *kan* and *kien* have many meanings, but both represent *see* or *sight*, and when the two are combined, the meaning is unmistakable; if one were used alone misconception would be frequent. When, however, two Chinamen do not understand one another orally, recourse is had to the *sign*, which represents the idea, and which is made on the hand or in the air (for they have no alphabet); and this sign is universally intelligible.

Vowels represent simple exhalations of the breath. The lips, the teeth, the palate, and the throat are called into use when a consonant has to be pronounced. The combination of consonants in a sequence presents the greatest difficulty to the speaker. Many rude nations are unable to unite consonants without the intervention of a connecting vowel. The Sclavonic letter *m* (schtsh), the English *th*, the Welsh *ll*, and many others, are not pronounceable by the larger portion of the human race. *Yankee* (N. A. Indian) was through Yenke, Yngkele, Ingelis, derived from *English*; *pigeon* (Chinese), pigins, pignis, bisnis, from *business*.

There is some ground for the theory that the fewer the consonants in language the greater must be its antiquity. And it is to be observed that consonants are fewest in the idioms of tropical nations. There are, however, exceptions to this. The Finnish language is remarkable for the small number of consonants in the aboriginal Finnish words; but the inflections of its nouns and verbs are greater than in most languages, and can only have been the result of its use for many ages.

The first attempts at utterance, or, rather, the earliest sounds of the infant, will be found associated with the parental and filial relations. *Ba*, *pa*, *ma*, occur in most languages as one of, or part of, the forms by which the child appeals to the maternal or paternal care.

Imitative sounds, again, run through most languages, whether rude or polished. Birds take the name of their notes, as *cuckoo*, *peewit*. Many insects and beasts may be known by the resemblance between their names and their voices. Hissing, grunting, humming, thundering, and a hundred others, represent noises to which the words assimilate: the ear has taught the tongue to give them expression.

Rude languages exhibit, far more than cultivated ones, the analogy between the sound and the object it designates. A recess, a den, a chasm, would naturally be represented by opening the mouth, and pronouncing the vowel *a*, which requires the widest separation of the lips. Something to assimilate the sign with the thing signified will be found in all the simpler forms of speech. But the longer languages exist, and the more their vocabularies are enriched, the less intimately will the sound be associated with the sense of a word: in process of time, the art of writing settles an orthography without reference to the origin of words. In the early stage of writing, spelling is necessarily capricious: intercourse

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and education are necessary to the adoption of any general system, and orthography must adapt itself to the alphabet which is adopted.

What we call *grammar* could not have been born with language, unless language had been divinely communicated. In its beginnings, language only represented objects visible or tangible to the external senses. Inward emotions displayed themselves in the changes of countenance (such as animals exhibit, but which appear in man with vastly superior power of expression), or in the utterance of ejaculatory sounds. All languages retain these, with much similarity and even identity of character; but the words which represent the more refined sensibilities are of later development.

In the elementary forms of language there is no distinction between nouns and verbs—there are no declensions or conjugations. Pronouns are nouns; adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions are non-existent. Substantives and adjectives come under the same category. Where ideas are represented by signs (as in Chinese), the inflections of nouns and verbs are not seen in the modifications of the *root*, but in the addition of some other sign. A change of position may show the distinction between active and passive, the signs being the same. Man, love, will mean that a man loves; love, man, that a man is loved. In the languages that represent the highest civilization, the modes of inflection differ greatly. The tenses of our English verbs are mostly represented by auxiliary verbs; the cases of our nouns by particles. We are satisfied with one subjunctive mood; the Spaniards have three. The Germans will have three genders for their definite articles; we will have only one; many languages do without any. Could we trace languages to their earliest stages, we should find only the primary words which represent some definite thought, or thing, or act, whether to that thought, thing, or act we give the name of noun or verb; but the relations of the primary word to time, to place, to other objects, would, in process of time, be found in modifications of the primitive root, or in additions to it, which would represent those other relations.

The disappearance of the ruder idioms from the face of the earth, the invasions of the more perfect forms of speech into the territories of the less perfect, the numerous additions made to the vocabularies of civilized nations, the influence of commerce, of philosophical investigation and discoveries, of travel, of the study of other tongues, upon spoken and written language, are questions every one of which affords materials for volumes of inquiry. What have been the results of warlike invasions?—what of peaceful intercourse? What may have been done by legislation—what by religious action—to maintain, to mould, to modify the instruments of outward communication by the tongue, the pen, the press, are subjects of no common interest. The migration of words affords as various and as wide a field for study as that of seeds, or fishes, or birds, or beasts, or men; and many of the phenomena would not easily be solved.

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Of Geese.

In most large households there is some unfortunate wight to be found who enjoys the unhappy and unenviable distinction of being "the fool of the family." To what circumstance he originally owed this disagreeable *sobriquet* is not always certain; but if it happened to attach to him in very early life, he has but a sorry chance of ridding himself of it, act he afterwards never so wisely. Do what he may, say what he will, he has acquired the reputation of the fool, and this will cloud in most people's eyes any small merit he may possibly exhibit at a later period. There are certain animals too, in the lower orders of creation, who, by the general, nay the almost universal, assent of mankind, have obtained, and often very undeservedly, the character of being, beyond their fellows, silly and foolish, or having, as Pinkerton expresses it in one of his amusing letters, "a fine genius for stupidity."

Amongst these luckless creatures none stands second to the goose. But a little consideration will satisfy us that this despised and decried bird, whose many excellent qualities are—as has been the case with many a great man—never discovered till after his death, has been harshly judged of by the world, who—with the same injustice which condemned Socrates, and stigmatized the shapely Richard III. as a humpback, denounced Macchiavelli as the advocate of political immorality, and Robespierre as being no less fond of blood than were the horses of Diomed—ascribes to the goose an immeasurable stupidity, together with a vanity of not more moderate dimensions. Now it is not a little remarkable that Pliny observes that *modesty* is the attribute which, in the view of many persons, is most conspicuous in this maligned biped, and, from his mode of expressing himself, one might almost infer the old naturalist shared in this belief. When the Hindoo writers desire to intimate that a woman's movements are graceful, they say she walks like a goose—a parallel that scarcely would be instituted if in step or gesture the goose betrayed any of the vanity he has been so wantonly accused of. Indeed, when Frederick Nausea, Bishop of Vienne, desired, in his panegyric on St. Quintin, to convey a fitting idea of the sobriety, chastity, and vigilance of that eminent personage, he found he could not express himself more forcibly than by asserting the holy and virtuous man closely resembled a goose. Had folly been esteemed a prominent characteristic of the bird, the saint would hardly have been likened to it; but it is only ignorance of the darkest hue that ventures to portray the goose as deficient in sagacity or intelligence.

There again is Pliny to be cited, who remarks of geese, that "one might almost be tempted to think that these creatures have an apprecia-

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tion of wisdom, for it is said that one of them was the constant companion of the peripatetic philosopher Lacydes, and would never leave him, either in public or when at the bath, by night or by day." We learn from another source, that when this wisdom-loving goose unfortunately died, his friend and companion, the philosopher, honoured him with that last token of affection and respect, a costly and splendid funeral. Ælian speaks of a particular species of the anserine tribe, which he calls *chenalopex* or fox-goose, and which, according to his account, derived this appellation from its crafty and mischievous qualities. He adds, however, that the bird was an object of worship to the Egyptians, so the probability is, that the imputed craft was nothing else than an unusual amount of sagacity, and the propensity to mischief was only an ill name awarded to superior activity and more than ordinary vivacity; for it is inconceivable that the wisest people of antiquity should reverence an animal in which low cunning and an aptitude for malice were predominating characteristics.

It is perfectly well known that if the ancient Egyptians worshipped the goose, they ate him as well—goose-flesh and beef constituting the principal portion of their animal food; and perhaps we should not greatly mistake the matter were we to suppose that, as from the one they hoped to derive physical strength, so from the other they expected to borrow intellectual vigour. It has been an opinion long current amongst mankind that as the bodily, so the mental, faculties depend for their condition merely on the nature of the aliment consumed; that some species of food have a direct influence in modifying the action of the brain, either stimulating its activity, or dulling its powers; and that, in the case of animal diet, the nature of the animal consumed will, in a greater or less degree, become the nature of the animal consuming. Thus, amongst some nations, the hare and the deer are eschewed as articles of sustenance, lest, in eating, the fearfulness and timidity of these quickly terrified creatures should be acquired; whilst other nations have devoured wolves' flesh, and drunk lions' blood, in the hope of thereby becoming fierce and courageous. From such opinions the Egyptians were notoriously not exempt; and, therefore, it is not unreasonable to suppose, in their belief, the mental capacity of the goose was of a high order, inasmuch as they were so greatly devoted to its use for the purposes of food.

But it is unnecessary to recur to so remote a period as that in which "the wisdom of the Egyptians" flourished to establish our position. There, close at hand, is a shrewd enough fellow ready to bear testimony on the goose's behalf. What says Taylor, the water poet? With him the goose is always feminine, for he writes—

> *Her* brains with salt and pepper if you blend
> And eat, they will the understanding mend.

And again—

> *Her* lungs and liver into powder dried,
> And, fasting, in an ass's milk applied,
> Is an experienced cordial for the spleen.

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The conviction prevailed in Taylor's age that men who fed on doves were ever placable, and never choleric; that, as we have just said, they imbibed, from the act of deglutition, the amiable and peace-loving disposition of the birds which the gastric apparatus was disposing of. If, then, a goose's brain, when eaten, mended the understanding, and its liver and lungs rectified the disorders of the spleen, the conclusion is irresistible that, so far from being a silly and vain specimen of creation, as has been hastily and ignorantly alleged, the goose is beyond compare to be esteemed for its intellectual superiority and gentleness of disposition. Benedetto Veltori, a celebrated practitioner in his day, used to prescribe, in cases of convulsions, *goose's grease*, roasted cat, and spice—the *rationale* of his practice evidently being to tranquillize the nerves by imparting to the patient the placidity of temperament and general composure which distinguishes alike the goose and the "harmless necessary cat." The therapeutical value of the goose has also been acknowledged in our own country, for we find that, in the island of Purbeck, geese were, and perhaps still are, habitually kept in the cow-houses, through a notion which is easier ridiculed than dispelled—that they contribute to the health of the cattle. In Batchelor's *Bedfordshire*, moreover, we read that, by many farmers in that county, geese are kept entirely from the belief that their presence in the pastures where the cattle feed is decidedly beneficial to the beasts in a sanitary point of view. It is supposed the birds in some way mitigate the hardness of the water, which is found extremely prejudicial to the cows. When several of Sir Edward Lyttleton's hounds were bitten by a mad dog, the owner was recommended to turn a flock of geese into the kennel, and the best results ensued; for the hounds, lapping up the goose-dung, were either cured of the hydrophobia, or protected against its attacks as by a powerful and efficient prophylactic. Possessing curative virtues of this description, we are scarcely entitled to wonder when we find Dr. Donne observing that "the voice and sound of the goose and snake is all one," for was not the snake dedicated to Æsculapius, and supposed to image the profoundest wisdom? And if it has been shown a goose can cure the hydrophobia, it has been shown he can do a great deal more than our faculties of medicine have ever yet achieved with all their efforts. In the *Philosophical Transactions* it is asserted that, of all animals the goose is the most prescient of earthquakes—all animals, of course include astronomers royal and their assistants, so let Mr. Airey and Mr. Glaisher look to it; what prescience have *they* of earthquakes?

The carefulness of this bird has been warmly eulogized by Scaliger, who declares it the very emblem of prudence; for not only does it, when it finds itself indisposed, take at once to doctoring itself, but in passing under an arch, however lofty, it observes a proper precaution against the possibility of accident by stooping its head. An ill-tempered writer, whose last Michaelmas dinner had probably disagreed with him, in a tract to which he gave the affected title of "A Strange Metamorphosis of Man transformed into a Wildernesse, deciphered in Characters," gives

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another account of the matter. He says (with him, too, the goose, perhaps on account of its loquacity, is feminine), "She hath a great opinion of her own stature, especially if she be in company of the rest of her neighbours and fellow gossippes, the duckes and hennes, at a harvest feast; for then, if she enter into the Hall there, as high and wide as the Doore is, she will stoope for feare of breaking her head." This Zoïlus of a critic objects also to the concert with which these birds occasionally regale those who have the advantage of living in their vicinity. He declares that they "hate the lawrell, which is the reason they have no poet amongst them; so as if there be any that seem to have a smatch [*sic*] in that generous science, he arrives no higher than the style of a ballet, wherein they have reasonable faculties, especially at a Wake, when they assemble themselves together at a towne-greene, for then they sing their Ballets, and lay out such throats as the country fiddlers cannot be heard."

It is in a more generous spirit that Michael Savonarola testifies to their sagacity in every morning drinking before they touch their food, and thus ensuring, should not the cook interpose, for themselves a long life, as it is an ascertained fact, or supposed to be such, that birds which habitually drink before eating are invariably long-lived. In crossing Mount Taurus, which it does in flocks, it has been observed to take a stone in its beak, in order to maintain a total silence; for its cackling—a weakness to which it is unhappily addicted—would otherwise betray its presence to the eagles which abound in that region, and with whom the goose is a dainty as much appreciated as it is by the Scot at Christmas-tide. Although in some senses a solemn bird, which in England invariably at one time figured at funeral feasts, it has shown itself not insensible to the calls of domestic duty, for a goose has been seen in a kitchen industriously turning a spit on which a turkey has been roasting.

Writers on psychology lead us to believe that animals greatly given to sleep are usually inferior in sagacity to those whose somnolency is of a less marked character, and, in our own species, it is noticeable that, as the brain expands and the mental powers develop themselves, the amount of sleep indulged in sensibly diminishes. Amongst the lower animals the monkey has been considered the most closely to approximate to man in his organisation, and, as man is the least sleepy of *all* animals, so in a minor degree is the monkey less prone to slumber than most other animals. Now the wakefulness of the goose is proverbial, and supplies an additional reason for our protest against the calumnies to which the highly gifted and singularly endowed subject of these remarks has been ruthlessly exposed. It was the vigilance of her geese which saved Rome; the cackling bird was awake when the *civis Romanus* was wrapped in sweet oblivion, and that wakefulness long rendered the feathered sentry sacred in the eyes of the people. But gratitude wears out after a time, and at a subsequent period he was esteemed more for his edible excellencies

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than for his fortunate watchfulness. The geese which the Gauls reared in Picardy were driven to Rome on foot, and met a ready sale. A Consul Scipio Metellus—though another disputes with him the merit—is thought to have paid considerable attention to the fattening of the animal, whose liver, stuffed with figs, as Horace informs us, was accounted a *bonne bouche* by the masters of the world. But earlier than this the dietetical worthiness of the goose was practically recognized. An ancient Greek writer, some passage from whose works have been preserved by Athenæus, couples the "geese-feeders" with the "cowherds," as if the occupation of both was of equal importance; whilst Homer himself alludes to "the fine home-fattened goose"—fattened, it would appear, wholly upon wheat. The Church seems early to have taken this interesting bird under her motherly protection, although we do not exactly understand why at Rome, as Jeremy Taylor says, "the common people" should be "taught to pray to St. Gall for the health and fecundity of their geese," inasmuch as St. Ferreol is asserted by the canon Rabelais—no mean authority, we should think, on such a subject—to be the patron saint of all geese, and to have merited such a distinction by his devoted admiration of roast goose. This inimitable and most savoury dish was common on the table in France on St. Martin's day—that is, when in France St. Martin's day and other saints' days were held in regard—and, as it is pretended, as a slight upon the bird. It is said that the geese literally plagued the saint out of his life; that once, when preaching, a goose commenced an independent discourse in his own style, and on his own account, which vexed the saint to a degree to which no saint ought to be vexed; that accordingly he retired to a deep cave, in whose recesses he buried himself to meditate at his ease, but that there he found a goose had been before him, whose sonorous cackling completely upset his saintly composure, and drove him forth out of his retirement. To sum all, he, out of a sort of revenge, made such a hearty dinner off a goose, that, the bird proving not to be in prime condition, he fell ill, and very speedily died. In token of their high displeasure at the malevolence of geese, the people of France were said every year, on St. Martin's day, to make their repast off roast goose—as if it were necessary to forge so incredible a legend to account for so rational and laudable an act!

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The Small House at Allington.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE COMBAT.

I HAVE said that John Eames was at his office punctually at twelve; but an incident had happened before his arrival there very important in the annals which are now being told,—so important that it is essentially necessary that it should be described with some minuteness of detail.

Lord De Guest, in the various conversations which he had had with Eames as to Lily Dale and her present position, had always spoken of Crosbie with the most vehement abhorrence. "He is a damned blackguard," said the earl, and the fire had come out of his round eyes as he spoke. Now the earl was by no means given to cursing and swearing, in the sense which is ordinarily applied to these words. When he made use of such a phrase as that quoted above, it was to be presumed that he in some sort meant what he said; and so he did, and had intended to signify that Crosbie by his conduct had merited all such condemnation as was the fitting punishment for blackguardism of the worst description.

"He ought to have his neck broken," said Johnny.

"I don't know about that," said the earl. "The present times have become so pretty behaved that corporal punishment seems to have gone out of fashion. I shouldn't care so much about that, if any other punishment had taken its place. But it seems to me that a blackguard such as Crosbie can escape now altogether unscathed."

"He hasn't escaped yet," said Johnny.

"Don't you go and put your finger in the pie and make a fool of

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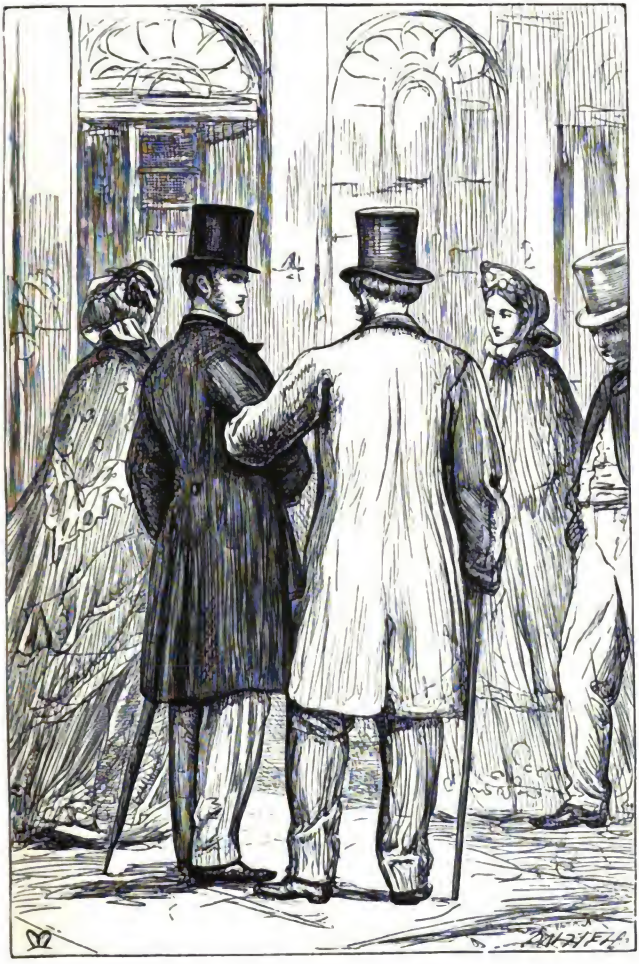

"And you went in at him on the Station?"

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yourself," said the earl. If it had behoved any one to resent in any violent fashion the evil done by Crosbie, Bernard Dale, the earl's nephew, should have been the avenger. This the earl felt, but under these circumstances he was disposed to think that there should be no such violent vengeance. "Things were different when I was young," he said to himself. But Eames gathered from the earl's tone that the earl's words were not strictly in accordance with his thoughts, and he declared to himself over and over again that Crosbie had not yet escaped.

He got into the train at Guestwick, taking a first-class ticket, because the earl's groom in livery was in attendance upon him. Had he been alone he would have gone in a cheaper carriage. Very weak in him, was it not? little also, and mean? My friend, can you say that you would not have done the same at his age? Are you quite sure that you would not do the same now that you are double his age? Be that as it may, Johnny Eames did that foolish thing, and gave the groom in livery half-a-crown into the bargain.

"We shall have you down again soon, Mr. John," said the groom, who seemed to understand that Mr. Eames was to be made quite at home at the manor.

He went fast to sleep in the carriage, and did not awake till the train was stopped at the Barchester Junction.

"Waiting for the up-train from Barchester, sir," said the guard. "They're always late." Then he went to sleep again, and was aroused in a few minutes by some one entering the carriage in a great hurry. The branch train had come in, just as the guardians of the line then present had made up their minds that the passengers on the main line should not be kept waiting any longer. The transfer of men, women, and luggage was therefore made in great haste, and they who were now taking their new seats had hardly time to look about them. An old gentleman, very red about the gills, first came into Johnny's carriage, which up to that moment he had shared with an old lady. The old gentleman was abusing everybody, because he was hurried, and would not take himself well into the compartment, but stuck in the doorway, standing on the step.

"Now, sir, when you're quite at leisure," said a voice behind the old man, which instantly made Eames start up in his seat.

"I'm not at all at leisure," said the old man; "and I'm not going to break my legs if I know it."

"Take your time, sir," said the guard.

"So I mean," said the old man, seating himself in the corner nearest to the open door, opposite to the old lady. Then Eames saw plainly that it was Crosbie who had first spoken, and that he was getting into the carriage.

Crosbie at the first glance saw no one but the old gentleman and the old lady, and he immediately made for the unoccupied corner seat. He was busy with his umbrella and his dressing-bag, and a little flustered by the pushing and hurrying. The carriage was actually in motion before

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he perceived that John Eames was opposite to him: Eames had, instinctively, drawn up his legs so as not to touch him. He felt that he had become very red in the face, and to tell the truth, the perspiration had broken out upon his brow. It was a great occasion,—great in its imminent trouble, and great in its opportunity for action. How was he to carry himself at the first moment of his recognition by his enemy, and what was he to do afterwards?

It need hardly be explained that Crosbie had also been spending his Christmas with a certain earl of his acquaintance, and that he too was returning to his office. In one respect he had been much more fortunate than poor Eames, for he had been made happy with the smiles of his lady love. Alexandrina and the countess had fluttered about him softly, treating him as a tame chattel, now belonging to the noble house of De Courcy, and in this way he had been initiated into the inner domesticities of that illustrious family. The two extra men-servants, hired to wait upon Lady Dumbello, had vanished. The champagne had ceased to flow in a perennial stream. Lady Rosina had come out from her solitude, and had preached at him constantly. Lady Margaretta had given him some lessons in economy. The Honourable John, in spite of a late quarrel, had borrowed five pounds from him. The Honourable George had engaged to come and stay with his sister during the next May. The earl had used a father-in-law's privilege, and had called him a fool. Lady Alexandrina had told him more than once, in rather a tart voice, that this must be done, and that that must be done; and the countess had given him her orders as though it was his duty, in the course of nature, to obey every word that fell from her. Such had been his Christmas delights; and now, as he returned back from the enjoyment of them, he found himself confronted in the railway carriage with Johnny Eames!

The eyes of the two met, and Crosbie made a slight inclination of his head. To this Eames gave no acknowledgment whatever, but looked straight into the other's face. Crosbie immediately saw that they were not to know each other, and was well contented that it should be so. Among all his many troubles, the enmity of John Eames did not go for much. He showed no appearance of being disconcerted, though our friend had shown much. He opened his bag, and taking out a book was soon deeply engaged in it, pursuing his studies as though the man opposite was quite unknown to him. I will not say that his mind did not run away from his book, for indeed there were many things of which he found it impossible not to think; but it did not revert to John Eames. Indeed, when the carriages reached Paddington, he had in truth all but forgotten him; and as he stepped out of the carriage, with his bag in his hand, was quite free from any remotest trouble on his account.

But it had not been so with Eames himself. Every moment of the journey had for him been crowded with thought as to what he would do now that chance had brought his enemy within his reach. He had been made quite wretched by the intensity of his thinking; and yet, when the

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carriages stopped, he had not made up his mind. His face had been covered with perspiration ever since Crosbie had come across him, and his limbs had hardly been under his own command. Here had come to him a great opportunity, and he felt so little confidence in himself that he almost knew that he would not use it properly. Twice and thrice he had almost flown at Crosbie's throat in the carriage, but he was restrained by an idea that the world and the police would be against him if he did such a thing in the presence of that old lady.

But when Crosbie turned his back upon him, and walked out, it was absolutely necessary that he should do something. He was not going to let the man escape, after all that he had said as to the expediency of thrashing him. Any other disgrace would be preferable to that. Fearing, therefore, lest his enemy should be too quick for him, he hurried out after him, and only just gave Crosbie time to turn round and face the carriages before he was upon him. "You confounded scoundrel!" he screamed out. "You confounded scoundrel!" and seized him by the throat, throwing himself upon him, and almost devouring him by the fury of his eyes.

The crowd upon the platform was not very dense, but there were quite enough of people to make a very respectable audience for this little play. Crosbie, in his dismay, retreated a step or two, and his retreat was much accelerated by the weight of Eames' attack. He endeavoured to free his throat from his foe's grasp; but in that he failed entirely. For the minute, however, he did manage to escape any positive blow, owing his safety in that respect rather to Eames' awkwardness than to his own efforts. Something about the police he was just able to utter, and there was, as a matter of course, an immediate call for a supply of those functionaries. In about three minutes three policemen, assisted by six porters, had captured our poor friend Johnny; but this had not been done quick enough for Crosbie's purposes. The bystanders, taken by surprise, had allowed the combatants to fall back upon Mr. Smith's book-stall, and there Eames laid his foe prostrate among the newspapers, falling himself into the yellow shilling-novel depôt by the over fury of his own energy; but as he fell, he contrived to lodge one blow with his fist in Crosbie's right eye,—one telling blow; and Crosbie had, to all intents and purposes, been thrashed.

"Con—founded scoundrel, rascal, blackguard!" shouted Johnny, with what remnants of voice were left to him, as the police dragged him off. "If you only knew—what he's—done." But in the meantime the policemen held him fast.

As a matter of course the first burst of public sympathy went with Crosbie. He had been assaulted, and the assault had come from Eames. In the British bosom there is so firm a love of well-constituted order, that these facts alone were sufficient to bring twenty knights to the assistance of the three policemen and the six porters; so that for Eames, even had he desired it, there was no possible chance of escape. But he did not desire it. One only sorrow consumed him at present. He had, as he

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felt, attacked Crosbie, but had attacked him in vain. He had had his opportunity, and had misused it. He was perfectly unconscious of that happy blow, and was in absolute ignorance of the great fact that his enemy's eye was already swollen and closed, and that in another hour it would be as black as his hat.

"He is a con—founded rascal!" ejaculated Eames, as the policemen and porters hauled him about. "You don't know what he's done."

"No, we don't," said the senior constable; "but we know what you have done. I say, Bushers, where's that gentleman? He'd better come along with us."

Crosbie had been picked up from among the newspapers by another policeman and two or three other porters, and was attended also by the guard of the train, who knew him, and knew that he had come up from Courcy Castle. Three or four hangers-on were standing also around him, together with a benevolent medical man who was proposing to him an immediate application of leeches. If he could have done as he wished, he would have gone his way quietly, allowing Eames to do the same. A great evil had befallen him, but he could in no way mitigate that evil by taking the law of the man who had attacked him. To have the thing as little talked about as possible should be his endeavour. What though he should have Eames locked up and fined, and scolded by a police magistrate? That would not in any degree lessen his calamity. If he could have parried the attack, and got the better of his foe; if he could have administered the black eye instead of receiving it, then indeed he could have laughed the matter off at his club, and his original crime would have been somewhat glozed over by his success in arms. But such good fortune had not been his. He was forced, however, on the moment to decide as to what he would do.

"We've got him here in custody, sir," said Bushers, touching his hat. It had become known from the guard that Crosbie was somewhat of a big man, a frequent guest at Courcy Castle, and of repute and station in the higher regions of the Metropolitan world. "The magistrates will be sitting at Paddington, now, sir—or will be by the time we get there."

By this time some mighty railway authority had come upon the scene and made himself cognizant of the facts of the row,—a stern official who seemed to carry the weight of many engines on his brow; one at the very sight of whom smokers would drop their cigars, and porters close their fists against sixpences; a great man with an erect chin, a quick step, and a well-brushed hat powerful with an elaborately upturned brim. This was the platform-superintendent, dominant even over the policemen.

"Step into my room, Mr. Crosbie," he said. "Stubbs, bring that man in with you." And then, before Crosbie had been able to make up his mind as to any other line of conduct, he found himself in the superintendent's room, accompanied by the guard, and by the two policemen who conducted Johnny Eames between them.

"What's all this?" said the superintendent, still keeping on his hat,

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for he was aware how much of the excellence of his personal dignity was owing to the arrangement of that article; and as he spoke he frowned upon the culprit with his utmost severity. "Mr. Crosbie, I am very sorry that you should have been exposed to such brutality on our platform."

"You don't know what he has done," said Johnny. "He is the most confounded scoundrel living. He has broken——" But then he stopped himself. He was going to tell the superintendent that the confounded scoundrel had broken a beautiful young lady's heart; but he bethought himself that he would not allude more specially to Lily Dale in that hearing.

"Do you know who he is, Mr. Crosbie," said the superintendent.

"Oh, yes," said Crosbie, whose eye was already becoming blue. "He is a clerk in the Income-tax Office, and his name is Eames. I believe you had better leave him to me."

But the superintendent at once wrote down the words "Income-tax Office,—Eames," on his tablet. "We can't allow a row like that to take place on our platform and not notice it. I shall bring it before the directors. It's a most disgraceful affair, Mr. Eames,—most disgraceful."

But Johnny by this time had perceived that Crosbie's eye was in a state which proved satisfactorily that his morning's work had not been thrown away, and his spirits were rising accordingly. He did not care two straws for the superintendent or even for the policemen, if only the story could be made to tell well for himself hereafter. It was his object to have thrashed Crosbie, and now, as he looked at his enemy's face, he acknowledged that Providence had been good to him.

"That's your opinion," said Johnny.

"Yes, sir, it is," said the superintendent; "and I shall know how to represent the matter to your superiors, young man."

"You don't know all about it," said Eames; "and I don't suppose you ever will. I had made up my mind what I'd do the first time I saw that scoundrel there; and now I've done it. He'd have got much worse in the railway carriage, only there was a lady there."

"Mr. Crosbie, I really think we had better take him before the magistrates."

To this, however, Crosbie objected. He assured the superintendent that he would himself know how to deal with the matter,—which, however, was exactly what he did not know. Would the superintendent allow one of the railway servants to get a cab for him, and to find his luggage? He was very anxious to get home without being subjected to any more of Mr. Eames' insolence.

"You haven't done with Mr. Eames' insolence yet, I can tell you. All London shall hear of it, and shall know why. If you have any shame in you, you shall be ashamed to show your face."

Unfortunate man! Who can say that punishment,—adequate punishment,—had not overtaken him? For the present, he had to sneak home with a black eye, with the knowledge inside him that he had been

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whipped by a clerk in the Income-tax Office; and for the future,—he was bound over to marry Lady Alexandrina De Courcy!

He got himself smuggled off in a cab, without being forced to go again upon the platform, his luggage being brought to him by two assiduous porters. But in all this there was very little balm for his hurt pride. As he ordered the cabman to drive to Mount Street, he felt that he had ruined himself by that step in life which he had taken at Courcy Castle. Whichever way he looked he had no comfort. "D—— the fellow!" he said, almost out loud in the cab; but though he did with his outward voice allude to Eames, the curse in his inner thoughts was uttered against himself.

Johnny was allowed to make his way down to the platform, and there find his own carpet-bag. One young porter, however, came up and fraternized with him.

"You guve it him tidy just at that last moment, sir. But, laws, sir, you should have let out at him at fust. What's the use of clawing a man's neck-collar?"

It was then a quarter past eleven, but, nevertheless, Eames appeared at his office precisely at twelve.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Væ Victis.

Crosbie had two engagements for that day; one being his natural engagement to do his work at his office, and the other an engagement, which was now very often becoming as natural, to dine at St. John's Wood with Lady Amelia Gazebee. It was manifest to him when he looked at himself in the glass that he could keep neither of these engagements. "Oh, laws, Mr. Crosbie," the woman of the house exclaimed when she saw him.

"Yes, I know," said he. "I've had an accident and got a black eye. What's a good thing for it?"

"Oh! an accident!" said the woman, who knew well that that mark had been made by another man's fist. "They do say that a bit of raw beef is about the best thing. But then it must be held on constant all the morning."

Anything would be better than leeches, which tell long-enduring tales, and therefore Crosbie sat through the greater part of the morning holding the raw beef to his eye.

But it was necessary that he should write two notes as he held it, one to Mr. Butterwell at his office, and the other to his future sister-in-law. He felt that it would hardly be wise to attempt any entire concealment of the nature of his catastrophe, as some of the circumstances would assuredly become known. If he said that he had fallen over the

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coal-scuttle or on to the fender, thereby cutting his face, people would learn that he had fibbed, and would learn also that he had had some reason for fibbing. Therefore he constructed his notes with a phraseology that bound him to no details. To Butterwell he said that he had had an accident,—or rather a row,—and that he had come out of it with considerable damage to his frontispiece. He intended to be at the office on the next day, whether able to appear decently there or not. But for the sake of decency he thought it well to give himself that one half-day's chance. Then to the Lady Amelia he also said that he had had an accident, and had been a little hurt. "It is nothing at all serious, and affects only my appearance, so that I had better remain in for a day. I shall certainly be with you on Sunday. Don't let Gazebee trouble himself to come to me, as I shan't be at home after to-day." Gazebee did trouble himself to come to Mount Street so often, and South Audley Street, in which was Mr. Gazebee's office, was so disagreeably near to Mount Street, that Crosbie inserted this in order to protect himself if possible. Then he gave special orders that he was to be at home to no one, fearing that Gazebee would call for him after the hours of business,—to make him safe and carry him off bodily to St. John's Wood.

The beefsteak and the dose of physic and the cold-water application which was kept upon it all night was not efficacious in dispelling that horrid, black-blue colour by ten o'clock on the following morning.

"It certainly have gone down, Mr. Crosbie; it certainly have," said the mistress of the lodgings, touching the part affected with her finger. "But the black won't go out of them all in a minute; it won't indeed. Couldn't you just stay in one more day?"

"But will one day do it, Mrs. Phillips?"

Mrs. Phillips couldn't take upon herself to say that it would. "They mostly come with little red streaks across the black before they goes away," said Mrs. Phillips, who would seem to have been the wife of a prize-fighter, so well was she acquainted with black eyes.

"And that won't be till to-morrow," said Crosbie, affecting to be mirthful in his agony.

"Not till the third day;—and then they wears themselves out, gradual. I never knew leeches do any good."

He stayed at home the second day, and then resolved that he would go to his office, black eye and all. In that morning's newspaper he saw an account of the whole transaction, saying how Mr. C—— of the office of General Committees, who was soon about to lead to the hymeneal altar the beautiful daughter of the Earl De C——, had been made the subject of a brutal personal attack on the platform of the Great Western Railway Station, and how he was confined to his room from the injuries which he had received. The paragraph went on to state that the delinquent had, as it was believed, dared to raise his eyes to the same lady, and that his audacity had been treated with scorn by every member of the noble family in question. "It was, however, satisfactory to know," so said the

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newspaper, "that Mr. C—— had amply avenged himself, and had so flogged the young man in question, that he had been unable to stir from his bed since the occurrence."

On reading this Crosbie felt that it would be better that he should show himself at once, and tell as much of the truth as the world would be likely to ascertain at last without his telling. So on that third morning he put on his hat and gloves, and had himself taken to his office, though the red-streaky period of his misfortune had hardly even yet come upon him. The task of walking along the office passage, through the messengers' lobby, and into his room, was very disagreeable. Of course everybody looked at him, and of course he failed in his attempt to appear as though he did not mind it. "Boggs," he said to one of the men as he passed by, "just see if Mr. Butterwell is in his room," and then, as he expected, Mr. Butterwell came to him after the expiration of a few minutes.

"Upon my word, that is serious," said Mr. Butterwell, looking into the secretary's damaged face. "I don't think I would have come out if I had been you."

"Of course it's disagreeable," said Crosbie; "but it's better to put up with it. Fellows do tell such horrid lies if a man isn't seen for a day or two. I believe it's best to put a good face upon it."

"That's more than you can do just at present, eh, Crosbie?" And then Mr. Butterwell tittered. "But how on earth did it happen? The paper says that you pretty well killed the fellow who did it."

"The paper lies, as papers always do. I didn't touch him at all."

"Didn't you, though? I should like to have had a poke at him after getting such a tap in the face as that."

"The policemen came, and all that sort of thing. One isn't allowed to fight it out in a row of that kind as one would have to do on Salisbury heath. Not that I mean to say that I could lick the fellow. How's a man to know whether he can or not?"

"How, indeed, unless he gets a licking,—or gives it? But who was he, and what's this about his having been scorned by the noble family?"

"Trash and lies, of course. He had never seen any of the De Courcy people."

"I suppose the truth is, it was about that other——eh, Crosbie? I knew you'd find yourself in some trouble before you'd done."

"I don't know what it was about, or why he should have made such a brute of himself. You have heard about those people at Allington?"

"Oh, yes; I have heard about them."

"God knows, I didn't mean to say anything against them. They knew nothing about it."

"But the young fellow knew them? Ah, yes, I see all about it. He wants to step into your shoes. I can't say that he sets about it in a bad way. But what do you mean to do?"

"Nothing."

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"Nothing! Won't that look queer? I think I should have him before the magistrates."

"You see, Butterwell, I am bound to spare that girl's name. I know I have behaved badly."

"Well, yes; I fear you have."

Mr. Butterwell said this with some considerable amount of decision in his voice, as though he did not intend to mince matters, or in any way to hide his opinion. Crosbie had got into a way of condemning himself in this matter of his marriage, but was very anxious that others, on hearing such condemnation from him, should say something in the way of palliating his fault. It would be so easy for a friend to remark that such little peccadilloes were not altogether uncommon, and that it would sometimes happen in life that people did not know their own minds. He had hoped for some such benevolence from Fowler Pratt, but had hoped in vain. Butterwell was a good-natured, easy man, anxious to stand well with all about him, never pretending to any very high tone of feeling or of morals; and yet Butterwell would say no word of comfort to him. He could get no one to slur over his sin for him, as though it were no sin,—only an unfortunate mistake; no one but the De Courcys, who had, as it were, taken possession of him and swallowed him alive.

"It can't be helped now," said Crosbie. "But as for that fellow who made such a brutal attack on me the other morning, he knows that he is safe behind her petticoats. I can do nothing which would not make some mention of her name necessary."

"Ah, yes; I see," said Butterwell. "It's very unfortunate; very. I don't know that I can do anything for you. Will you come before the Board to-day?"

"Yes; of course I shall," said Crosbie, who was becoming very sore. His sharp ear had told him that all Butterwell's respect and cordiality were gone,—at any rate for the time. Butterwell, though holding the higher official rank, had always been accustomed to treat him as though he, the inferior, were to be courted. He had possessed, and had known himself to possess, in his office as well as in the outside world, a sort of rank much higher than that which from his position he could claim legitimately. Now he was being deposed. There could be no better touchstone in such a matter than Butterwell. He would go as the world went, but he would perceive almost intuitively how the world intended to go. "Tact, tact, tact," as he was in the habit of saying to himself when walking along the paths of his Putney villa. Crosbie was now secretary, whereas a few months before he had been simply a clerk; but, nevertheless, Mr. Butterwell's instinct told him that Crosbie had fallen. Therefore he declined to offer any sympathy to the man in his misfortune, and felt aware, as he left the secretary's room, that it might probably be some time before he visited it again.

Crosbie resolved in his soreness that henceforth he would brazen it out. He would go to the Board, with as much indifference as to his black

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eye as he was able to assume, and if any one said aught to him he would be ready with his answer. He would go to his club, and let him who intended to show him any slight beware of him in his wrath. He could not turn upon John Eames, but he could turn upon others if it were necessary. He had not gained for himself a position before the world, and held it now for some years, to allow himself to be crushed at once because he had made a mistake. If the world, his world, chose to go to war with him, he would be ready for the fight. As for Butterwell,—Butterwell the incompetent, Butterwell the vapid,—for Butterwell, who in every little official difficulty had for years past come to him, he would let Butterwell know what it was to be thus disloyal to one who had condescended to be his friend. He would show them all at the Board that he scorned them, and could be their master. Then, too, as he was making some other resolves as to his future conduct, he made one or two resolutions respecting the De Courcy people. He would make it known to them that he was not going to be their very humble servant. He would speak out his mind with considerable plainness; and if upon that they should choose to break off this "alliance," they might do so; he would not break his heart. And as he leaned back in his arm-chair, thinking of all this, an idea made its way into his brain,—a floating castle in the air, rather than the image of a thing that might by possibility be realized; and in this castle in the air he saw himself kneeling again at Lily's feet, asking her pardon, and begging that he might once more be taken to her heart.

"Mr. Crosbie is here to-day," said Mr. Butterwell to Mr. Optimist.

"Oh, indeed," said Mr. Optimist, very gravely; for he had heard all about the row at the railway station.

"They've made a monstrous show of him."

"I am very sorry to hear it. It's so—so—so—— If it were one of the younger clerks, you know, we should tell him that it was discreditable to the department."

"If a man gets a blow in the eye, he can't help it, you know. He didn't do it himself, I suppose," said Major Fiasco.

"I am well aware that he didn't do it himself," continued Mr. Optimist; "but I really think that, in his position, he should have kept himself out of any such encounter."

"He would have done so if he could, with all his heart," said the major. "I don't suppose he liked being thrashed any better than I should."

"Nobody gives me a black eye," said Mr. Optimist.

"Nobody has as yet," said the major.

"I hope they never will," said Mr. Butterwell. Then, the hour for their meeting having come round, Mr. Crosbie came into the Board-room.

"We have been very sorry to hear of this misfortune," said Mr. Optimist, very gravely.

"Not half so sorry as I have been," said Crosbie, with a laugh. "It's an uncommon nuisance to have a black eye, and to go about looking like a prize-fighter."

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"And like a prize-fighter that didn't win his battle, too," said Fiasco.

"I don't know that there's much difference as to that," said Crosbie. "But the whole thing is a nuisance, and, if you please, we won't say anything more about it."

Mr. Optimist almost entertained an opinion that it was his duty to say something more about it. Was not he the chief Commissioner, and was not Mr. Crosbie secretary to the Board? Ought he, looking at their respective positions, to pass over without a word of notice such a manifest impropriety as this? Would not Sir Raffle Buffle have said something had Mr. Butterwell, when secretary, come to the office with a black eye? He wished to exercise all the full rights of a chairman; but, nevertheless, as he looked at the secretary he felt embarrassed, and was unable to find the proper words. "H—m, ha, well; we'll go to business now, if you please," he said, as though reserving to himself the right of returning to the secretary's black eye, when the more usual business of the Board should be completed. But when the more usual business of the Board had been completed, the secretary left the room without any further reference to his eye.

Crosbie, when he got back to his own apartment, found Mortimer Gazebee waiting there for him.

"My dear fellow," said Gazebee, "this is a very nasty affair."

"Uncommonly nasty," said Crosbie; "so nasty that I don't mean to talk about it to anybody."

"Lady Amelia is quite unhappy." He always called her Lady Amelia, even when speaking of her to his own brothers and sisters. He was too well behaved to take the liberty of calling an earl's daughter by her plain Christian name, even though that earl's daughter was his own wife. "She fears that you have been a good deal hurt."

"Not at all hurt; but disfigured, as you see."

"And so you beat the fellow well that did it?"

"No, I didn't," said Crosbie, very angrily. "I didn't beat him at all. You don't believe everything you read in the newspapers; do you?"

"No, I don't believe everything. Of course I didn't believe about his having aspired to an alliance with Lady Alexandrina. That was untrue, of course." Mr. Gazebee showed by the tone of his voice that imprudence so unparalleled as that was quite incredible.

"You shouldn't believe anything; except this,—that I have got a black eye."

"You certainly have got that. Lady Amelia thinks you would be more comfortable if you would come up to us this evening. You can't go out, of course; but Lady Amelia said, very good-naturedly, that you need not mind with her."

"Thank you, no; I'll come on Sunday."

"Of course Lady Alexandrina will be very anxious to hear from her sister; and Lady Amelia begged me very particularly to press you to come."

"Thank you, no; not to-day."

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"Why not?"

"Oh, simply because I shall be better at home."

"How can you be better at home? You can have anything that you want. Lady Amelia won't mind, you know."

Another beefsteak to his eye, as he sat in the drawing-room, a cold-water bandage, or any little medical appliance of that sort;—these were the things which Lady Amelia would, in her domestic good nature, condescend not to mind!

"I won't trouble her this evening," said Crosbie.

"Well, upon my word, I think you're wrong. All manner of stories will get down to Courcy Castle, and to the countess's ears; and you don't know what harm may come of it. Lady Amelia thinks she had better write and explain it; but she can't do so till she has heard something about it from you."

"Look here, Gazebee. I don't care one straw what story finds its way down to Courcy Castle."

"But if the earl were to hear anything, and be offended?"

"He may recover from his offence as he best likes."

"My dear fellow;—that's talking wildly, you know."

"What on earth do you suppose the earl can do to me? Do you think I'm going to live in fear of Lord De Courcy all my life, because I'm going to marry his daughter? I shall write to Alexandrina myself to-day, and you can tell her sister so. I'll be up to dinner on Sunday, unless my face makes it altogether out of the question."

"And you won't come in time for church?"

"Would you have me go to church with such a face as this?"

Then Mr. Mortimer Gazebee went, and when he got home he told his wife that Crosbie was taking things with a high hand. "The fact is, my dear, that he's ashamed of himself, and therefore tries to put a bold face upon it."

"It was very foolish of him throwing himself in the way of that young man,—very; and so I shall tell him on Sunday. If he chooses to give himself airs to me, I shall make him understand that he is very wrong. He should remember now that the way in which he conducts himself is a matter of moment to all our family."

"Of course he should," said Mr. Gazebee.

When the Sunday came the red-streaky period had arrived, but had by no means as yet passed away. The men at the office had almost become used to it; but Crosbie, in spite of his determination to go down to the club, had not yet shown himself elsewhere. Of course he did not go to church, but at five he made his appearance at the house in St. John's Wood. They always dined at five on Sundays, having some idea that by doing so they kept the Sabbath better than they would have done had they dined at seven. If keeping the Sabbath consists in going to bed early, or is in any way assisted by such a practice, they were right. To the cook that semi-early dinner might perhaps be convenient,

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as it gave her an excuse for not going to church in the afternoon, as the servants' and children's dinner gave her a similar excuse in the morning. Such little attempts at goodness,—proceeding half the way, or perhaps, as in this instance, one quarter of the way, on the disagreeable path towards goodness,—are very common with respectable people, such as Lady Amelia. If she would have dined at one o'clock, and have eaten cold meat, one perhaps might have felt that she was entitled to some praise.

"Dear, dear, dear; this is very sad, isn't it, Adolphus?" she said on first seeing him.

"Well, it is sad, Amelia," he said. He always called her Amelia, because she called him Adolphus; but Gazebee himself was never quite pleased when he heard it. Lady Amelia was older than Crosbie, and entitled to call him anything she liked; but he should have remembered the great difference in their rank. "It is sad, Amelia," he said. "But will you oblige me in one thing?"

"What thing, Adolphus?"

"Not to say a word more about it. The black eye is a bad thing no doubt, and has troubled me much; but the sympathy of my friends has troubled me a great deal more. I had all the family commiseration from Gazebee on Friday, and if it is repeated again, I shall lay down and die."

"Shall 'oo die, uncle Dolphus, 'cause 'oo've got a bad eye?" asked De Courcy Gazebee, the eldest hope of the family, looking up into his face.

"No, my hero," said Crosbie, taking the boy up into his arms, "not because I've got a black eye. There isn't very much harm in that, and you'll have a great many before you leave school. But because the people will go on talking about it."

"But aunt Dina on't like 'oo, if oo've got an ugly bad eye."

"But, Adolphus," said Lady Amelia, settling herself for an argument, "that's all very well, you know—and I'm sure I'm very sorry to cause you any annoyance,—but really one doesn't know how to pass over such a thing without speaking of it. I have had a letter from mamma."

"I hope Lady De Courcy is quite well."

"Quite well, thank you. But as a matter of course she is very anxious about this affair. She had read what has been said in the newspapers, and it may be necessary that Mortimer should take it up, as the family solicitor."

"Quite out of the question," said Adolphus.

"I don't think I should advise any such step as that," said Gazebee.

"Perhaps not; very likely not. But you cannot be surprised, Mortimer, that my mother under such circumstances should wish to know what are the facts of the case."

"Not at all surprised," said Gazebee.

"Then once for all, I'll tell you the facts. As I got out of the train a man I'd seen once before in my life made an attack upon me, and

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before the police came up, I got a blow in the face. Now you know all about it."

At that moment dinner was announced. "Will you give Lady Amelia your arm?" said the husband.

"It's a very sad occurrence," said Lady Amelia with a slight toss of her head, "and, I'm afraid, will cost my sister a great deal of vexation."

"You agree with De Courcy, do you, that aunt Dina won't like me with an ugly black eye?"

"I really don't think it's a joking matter," said the Lady Amelia. And then there was nothing more said about it during the dinner.

There was nothing more said about it during the dinner, but it was plain enough from Lady Amelia's countenance that she was not very well pleased with her future brother-in-law's conduct. She was very hospitable to him, pressing him to eat; but even in doing that she made repeated little references to his present unfortunate state. She told him that she did not think fried plum-pudding would be bad for him, but that she would recommend him not to drink port-wine after dinner. "By-the-by, Mortimer, you'd better have some claret up," she remarked. "Adolphus shouldn't take anything that is heating."

"Thank you," said Crosbie. "I'll have some brandy-and-water, if Gazebee will give it me."

"Brandy-and-water!" said Lady Amelia. Crosbie in truth was not given to the drinking of brandy-and-water; but he was prepared to call for raw gin, if he were driven much further by Lady Amelia's solicitude.

At these Sunday dinners the mistress of the house never went away into the drawing-room, and the tea was always brought into them at the table on which they had dined. It was another little step towards keeping holy the first day of the week. When Lady Rosina was there, she was indulged with the sight of six or seven solid good books which were laid upon the mahogany as soon as the bottles were taken off it. At her first prolonged visit she had obtained for herself the privilege of reading a sermon; but as on such occasions both Lady Amelia and Mr. Gazebee would go to sleep,—and as the footman had also once shown a tendency that way,—the sermon had been abandoned. But the master of the house, on these evenings, when his sister-in-law was present, was doomed to sit in idleness, or else to find solace in one of the solid good books. But Lady Rosina just now was in the country, and therefore the table was left unfurnished.

"And what am I to say to my mother?" said Lady Amelia, when they were alone.

"Give her my kindest regards," said Crosbie. It was quite clear, both to the husband and to the wife, that he was preparing himself for rebellion against authority.

For some ten minutes there was nothing said. Crosbie amused himself by playing with the boy whom he called Dicksey, by way of a nickname for De Courcy.

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"Mamma, he calls me Dicksey. Am I Dicksey? I'll call 'oo old Cross, and then aunt Dina on't like 'oo."

"I wish you would not call the child nicknames, Adolphus. It seems as though you would wish to cast a slur upon the one which he bears."

"I should hardly think that he would feel disposed to do that," said Mr. Gazebee.

"Hardly, indeed," said Crosbie.

"It has never yet been disgraced in the annals of our country by being made into a nickname," said the proud daughter of the house. She was probably unaware that among many of his associates her father had been called Lord De Curse'ye, from the occasional energy of his language. "And any such attempt is painful in my ears. I think something of my family, I can assure you, Adolphus, and so does my husband."

"A very great deal," said Mr. Gazebee.

"So do I of mine," said Crosbie. "That's natural to all of us. One of my ancestors came over with William the Conqueror. I think he was one of the assistant cooks in the king's tent."

"A cook!" said young De Courcy.

"Yes, my boy, a cook. That was the way most of our old families were made noble. They were cooks, or butlers to the kings,—or sometimes something worse."

"But your family isn't noble?"

"No;—I'll tell you how that was. The king wanted this cook to poison half-a-dozen of his officers who wished to have a way of their own; but the cook said, 'No, my Lord King; I am a cook, not an executioner.' So they sent him into the scullery, and when they called all the other servants barons and lords, they only called him Cookey. They've changed the name to Crosbie since that, by degrees."

Mr. Gazebee was awestruck, and the face of the Lady Amelia became very dark. Was it not evident that this snake, when taken into their innermost bosoms that they might there warm him, was becoming an adder, and preparing to sting them? There was very little more conversation that evening, and soon after the story of the cook, Crosbie got up and went away to his own home.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

"See, the Conquering Hero Comes."

John Eames had reached his office precisely at twelve o'clock, but when he did so he hardly knew whether he was standing on his heels or his head. The whole morning had been to him one of intense excitement, and latterly, to a certain extent, one of triumph. But he did not at all

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know what might be the results. Would he be taken before a magistrate and locked up? Would there be a row at the office? Would Crosbie call him out, and, if so, would it be incumbent on him to fight a duel with pistols? What would Lord De Guest say,—Lord De Guest, who had specially warned him not to take upon himself the duty of avenging Lily's wrongs? What would all the Dale family say of his conduct? And, above all, what would Lily say and think? Nevertheless, the feeling of triumph was predominant; and now, at this interval of time, he was beginning to remember with pleasure the sensation of his fist as it went into Crosbie's eye.

During his first day at the office he heard nothing about the affair, nor did he say a word of it to any one. It was known in his room that he had gone down to spend his Christmas holiday with Lord De Guest, and he was treated with some increased consideration accordingly. And, moreover, I must explain, in order that I may give Johnny Eames his due, he was gradually acquiring for himself a good footing among the income-tax officials. He knew his work, and did it with some manly confidence in his own powers, and also with some manly indifference to the occasional frowns of the mighty men of the department. He was, moreover, popular,—being somewhat of a radical in his official demeanour, and holding by his own rights, even though mighty men should frown. In truth, he was emerging from his hobbledehoyhood and entering upon his young-manhood, having probably to go through much folly and some false sentiment in that period of his existence, but still with fair promise of true manliness beyond, to those who were able to read the signs of his character.

Many questions on that first day were asked him about the glories of his Christmas, but he had very little to say on the subject. Indeed nothing could have been much more commonplace than his Christmas visit, had it not been for the one great object which had taken him down to that part of the country, and for the circumstance with which his holiday had been ended. On neither of these subjects was he disposed to speak openly; but as he walked home to Burton Crescent with Cradell, he did tell him of the affair with Crosbie.

"And you went in at him on the station?" asked Cradell, with admiring doubt.

"Yes, I did. If I didn't do it there, where was I to do it? I'd said I would, and therefore when I saw him I did it." Then the whole affair was told as to the black eye, the police, and the superintendent. "And what's to come next?" asked our hero.

"Well, he'll put it in the hands of a friend, of course; as I did with Fisher in that affair with Lupex. And, upon my word, Johnny, I shall have to do something of the kind again. His conduct last night was outrageous; would you believe it——"

"Oh, he's a fool."

"He's a fool you wouldn't like to meet when he's in one of his mad

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fits, I can tell you that. I absolutely had to sit up in my own bedroom all last night. Mother Roper told me that if I remained in the drawing-room she would feel herself obliged to have a policeman in the house. What could I do, you know? I made her have a fire for me, of course."

"And then you went to bed."

"I waited ever so long, because I thought that Maria would want to see me. At last she sent me a note. Maria is so imprudent, you know. If he had found anything in her writing, it would have been terrible, you know,—quite terrible. And who can say whether Jemima mayn't tell?"

"And what did she say?"

"Come; that's tellings, Master Johnny. I took very good care to take it with me to the office this morning, for fear of accidents."

But Eames was not so widely awake to the importance of his friend's adventures as he might have been had he not been weighted with adventures of his own.

"I shouldn't care so much," said he, "about that fellow, Crosbie, going to a friend, as I should about his going to a police magistrate."

"He'll put it in a friend's hands, of course," said Cradell, with the air of a man who from experience was well up in such matters. "And I suppose you'll naturally come to me. It's a deuced bore to a man in a public office, and all that kind of thing, of course. But I'm not the man to desert my friend. I'll stand by you, Johnny, my boy."

"Oh, thank you," said Eames, "I don't think that I shall want that."

"You must be ready with a friend, you know."

"I should write down to a man I know in the country, and ask his advice," said Eames; "an older sort of friend, you know."

"By Jove, old fellow, take care what you're about. Don't let them say of you that you show the white feather. Upon my honour, I'd sooner have anything said of me than that. I would, indeed,—anything."

"I'm not afraid of that," said Eames, with a touch of scorn in his voice. "There isn't much thought about white feathers now-a-days,—not in the way of fighting duels."

After that, Cradell managed to carry back the conversation to Mrs. Lupex and his own peculiar position, and as Eames did not care to ask from his companion further advice in his own matters, he listened nearly in silence till they reached Burton Crescent.

"I hope you found the noble earl well," said Mrs. Roper to him, as soon as they were all seated at dinner.

"I found the noble earl pretty well, thank you," said Johnny.

It had become plainly understood by all the Roperites that Eames' position was quite altered since he had been honoured with the friendship of Lord De Guest. Mrs. Lupex, next to whom he always sat at dinner, with a view to protecting her as it were from the dangerous neighbourhood of Cradell, treated him with a marked courtesy. Miss Spruce always called him "sir." Mrs. Roper helped him the first of the gentlemen, and was mindful about his fat and gravy, and Amelia felt less able

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than she was before to insist upon the possession of his heart and affections. It must not be supposed that Amelia intended to abandon the fight, and allow the enemy to walk off with his forces; but she felt herself constrained to treat him with a deference that was hardly compatible with the perfect equality which should attend any union of hearts.

"It is such a privilege to be on visiting terms with the nobility," said Mrs. Lupex. "When I was a girl, I used to be very intimate——"

"You ain't a girl any longer, and so you'd better not talk about it," said Lupex. Mr. Lupex had been at that little shop in Drury Lane after he came down from his scene-painting.

"My dear, you needn't be a brute to me before all Mrs. Roper's company. If, led away by feelings which I will not now describe, I left my proper circles in marrying you, you need not before all the world teach me how much I have to regret." And Mrs. Lupex, putting down her knife and fork, applied her handkerchief to her eyes.

"That's pleasant for a man over his meals, isn't it?" said Lupex, appealing to Miss Spruce. "I have plenty of that kind of thing, and you can't think how I like it."

"Them whom God has joined together, let no man put asunder," said Miss Spruce. "As for me myself, I'm only an old woman."

This little ebullition threw a gloom over the dinner-table, and nothing more was said on the occasion as to the glories of Eames' career. But, in the course of the evening, Amelia heard of the encounter which had taken place at the railway station, and at once perceived that she might use the occasion for her own purposes.

"John," she whispered to her victim, finding an opportunity for coming upon him when almost alone, "what is this I hear? I insist upon knowing. Are you going to fight a duel?"

"Nonsense," said Johnny.

"But it is not nonsense. You don't know what my feelings will be, if I think that such a thing is going to happen. But then you are so hard-hearted!"

"I ain't hard-hearted a bit, and I'm not going to fight a duel."

"But is it true that you beat Mr. Crosbie at the station?"

"It is true. I did beat him."

"Oh, John! not that I mean to say you were wrong, and indeed I honour you for the feeling. There can be nothing so dreadful as a young man's deceiving a young woman and leaving her after he has won her heart,—particularly when she has had his promise in plain words, or, perhaps, even in black and white." John thought of that horrid, foolish, wretched note which he had written. "And a poor girl, if she can't right herself by a breach of promise, doesn't know what to do. Does she, John?"

"A girl who'd right herself that way wouldn't be worth having."

"I don't know about that. When a poor girl is in such a position, she has to be said by her friends. I suppose, then, Miss Lily Dale won't bring a breach of promise against him."

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This mention of Lily's name in such a place was sacrilege in the ears of poor Eames. "I cannot tell," said he, "what may be the intention of the lady of whom you speak. But from what I know of her friends, I should not think that she will be disgraced by such a proceeding."

"That may be all very well for Miss Lily Dale——" Amelia said, and then she hesitated. It would not be well, she thought, absolutely to threaten him as yet,—not as long as there was any possibility that he might be won without a threat. "Of course I know all about it," she continued. "She was your L. D., you know. Not that I was ever jealous of her. To you she was no more than one of childhood's friends. Was she, Johnny?"

He stamped his foot upon the floor, and then jumped up from his seat. "I hate all that sort of twaddle about childhood's friends, and you know I do. You'll make me swear that I'll never come into this room again."

"Johnny!"

"So I will. The whole thing makes me sick. And as for that Mrs. Lupex——"

"If this is what you learn, John, by going to a lord's house, I think you had better stay at home with your own friends."

"Of course I had;—much better stay at home with my own friends. Here's Mrs. Lupex, and at any rate I can't stand her." So he went off, and walked round the Crescent, and down to the New Road, and almost into the Regent's Park, thinking of Lily Dale and of his own cowardice with Amelia Roper.

On the following morning he received a message, at about one o'clock, by the mouth of the Board-room messenger, informing him that his presence was required in the Board-room. "Sir Raffle Buffle has desired your presence, Mr. Eames."

"My presence, Tupper! what for?" said Johnny, turning upon the messenger almost with dismay.

"Indeed I can't say, Mr. Eames; but Sir Raffle Buffle has desired your presence in the Board-room."

Such a message as that in official life always strikes awe into the heart of a young man. And yet, young men generally come forth from such interviews without having received any serious damage, and generally talk about the old gentlemen whom they have encountered with a good deal of light-spirited sarcasm,—or chaff, as it is called in the slang phraseology of the day. It is that same 'majesty which doth hedge a king' that does it. The turkey-cock in his own farmyard is master of the occasion, and the thought of him creates fear. A bishop in his lawn, a judge on the bench, a chairman in a big room at the end of a long table, or a policeman with his bull's-eye lamp upon his beat, can all make themselves terrible by means of those appanages of majesty which have been vouchsafed to them. But how mean is the policeman in his own home, and how few thought much of Sir Raffle Buffle as he sat asleep after dinner in his old slippers! How well can I remember the terror

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created within me by the air of outraged dignity with which a certain fine old gentleman, now long since gone, could rub his hands slowly, one on the other, and look up to the ceiling, slightly shaking his head, as though lost in the contemplation of my iniquities! I would become sick in my stomach, and feel as though my ankles had been broken. That upward turn of the eye unmanned me so completely that I was speechless as regarded any defence. I think that that old man could hardly have known the extent of his own power.

Once upon a time a careless lad, having the charge of a bundle of letters addressed to the King,—petitions and such like, which in the course of business would not get beyond the hands of some lord-in-waiting's deputy assistant,—sent the bag which contained them to the wrong place; to Windsor, perhaps, if the Court were in London; or to St. James's, if it were at Windsor. He was summoned; and the great man of the occasion contented himself with holding his hands up to the heavens as he stood up from his chair, and exclaiming twice, "Mis-sent the Monarch's pouch! Mis-sent the Monarch's pouch!" That young man never knew how he escaped from the Board-room; but for a time he was deprived of all power of exertion, and could not resume his work till he had had six months' leave of absence, and been brought round upon rum and asses' milk. In that instance the peculiar use of the word Monarch had a power which the official magnate had never contemplated. The story is traditional; but I believe that the circumstance happened as lately as in the days of George the Third.

John Eames could laugh at the present chairman of the Income-tax Office with great freedom, and call him old Huffle Scuffle, and the like; but now that he was sent for, he also, in spite of his radical propensities, felt a little weak about his ankle joints. He knew, from the first hearing of the message, that he was wanted with reference to that affair at the railway station. Perhaps there might be a rule that any clerk should be dismissed who used his fists in any public place. There were many rules entailing the punishment of dismissal for many offences,—and he began to think that he did remember something of such a regulation. However, he got up, looked once around him upon his friends, and then followed Tupper into the Board-room.

"There's Johnny been sent for by old Scuffles," said one clerk.

"That's about his row with Crosbie," said another. "The Board can't do anything to him for that."

"Can't it?" said the first. "Didn't young Outonites have to resign because of that row at the Cider Cellars, though his cousin, Sir Constant Outonites, did all that he could for him?"

"But he was regularly up the spout with accommodation bills."

"I tell you that I wouldn't be in Eames' shoes for a trifle. Crosbie is secretary at the Committee Office, where Scuffles was chairman before he came here; and of course they're as thick as thieves. I shouldn't wonder if they didn't make him go down and apologize."

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"Johnny won't do that," said the other.

In the meantime John Eames was standing in the august presence. Sir Raffle Buffle was throned in his great oak arm-chair at the head of a long table in a very large room; and by him, at the corner of the table, was seated one of the assistant secretaries of the office. Another member of the Board was also at work upon the long table; but he was reading and signing papers at some distance from Sir Raffle, and paid no heed whatever to the scene. The assistant secretary, looking on, could see that Sir Raffle was annoyed by this want of attention on the part of his colleague, but all this was lost upon Eames.

"Mr. Eames?" said Sir Raffle, speaking with a peculiarly harsh voice, and looking at the culprit through a pair of gold-rimmed glasses, which he perched for the occasion upon his big nose. "Isn't that Mr. Eames?"

"Yes," said the assistant secretary, "this is Eames."

"Ah!"—and then there was a pause. "Come a little nearer, Mr. Eames, will you?" and Johnny drew nearer, advancing noiselessly over the Turkey carpet.

"Let me see; in the second class, isn't he? Ah! Do you know, Mr. Eames, that I have received a letter from the secretary to the Directors of the Great Western Railway Company, detailing circumstances which,—if truly stated in that letter,—redound very much to your discredit?"

"I did get into a row there yesterday, sir."

"Got into a row! It seems to me that you have got into a very serious row, and that I must tell the Directors of the Great Western Railway Company that the law must be allowed to take its course."

"I shan't mind that, sir, in the least," said Eames, brightening up a little under this view of the case.

"Not mind that, sir!" said Sir Raffle;—or rather, he shouted out the words at the offender before him. I am inclined to think that he overdid it, missing the effect which a milder tone might have attained. Perhaps there was lacking to him some of that majesty of demeanour and dramatic propriety of voice which had been so efficacious in the little story as to the King's bag of letters. As it was, Johnny gave a slight jump, but after his jump he felt better than he had been before. "Not mind, sir, being dragged before the criminal tribunals of your country, and being punished as a felon,—or rather as a misdemeanour,—for an outrage committed on a public platform! Not mind it! What do you mean, sir?"

"I mean, that I don't think the magistrate would say very much about it, sir. And I don't think Mr. Crosbie would come forward."

"But Mr. Crosbie must come forward, young man. Do you suppose that an outrage against the peace of the Metropolis is to go unpunished because he may not wish to pursue the matter? I'm afraid you must be very ignorant, young man."

"Perhaps I am," said Johnny.

"Very ignorant indeed,—very ignorant indeed. And are you aware,

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sir, that it would become a question with the Commissioners of this Board whether you could be retained in the service of this department if you were publicly punished by a police magistrate for such a disgraceful outrage as that."

Johnny looked round at the other Commissioner, but that gentleman did not raise his face from his papers.

"Mr. Eames is a very good clerk," whispered the assistant secretary, but in a voice which made his words audible to Eames; "one of the best young men we have," he added, in a voice which was not audible.

"Oh,—ah; very well. Now, I'll tell you what, Mr. Eames, I hope this will be a lesson to you,—a very serious lesson."

The assistant secretary, leaning back in his chair so as to be a little behind the head of Sir Raffle, did manage to catch the eye of the other Commissioner. The other Commissioner, barely looking round, smiled a little, and then the assistant secretary smiled also. Eames saw this, and he smiled too.

"Whether any ulterior consequences may still await the breach of the peace of which you have been guilty, I am not yet prepared to say," continued Sir Raffle. "You may go now."

And Johnny returned to his own place, with no increased reverence for the dignity of the chairman.

On the following morning one of his colleagues showed him with great glee the passage in the newspaper which informed the world that he had been so desperately beaten by Crosbie that he was obliged to keep his bed at this present time in consequence of the flogging that he had received. Then his anger was aroused, and he bounced about the big room of the Income-tax Office, regardless of assistant secretaries, head clerks, and all other official grandees whatsoever, denouncing the iniquities of the public press, and declaring his opinion that it would be better to live in Russia than in a country which allowed such audacious falsehoods to be propagated.

"He never touched me, Fisher; I don't think he ever tried; but, upon my honour, he never touched me."

"But, Johnny, it was bold in you to make up to Lord De Courcy's daughter," said Fisher.

"I never saw one of them in my life."

"He's going it altogether among the aristocracy, now," said another; "I suppose you wouldn't look at anybody under a viscount?"

"Can I help what that thief of an editor puts into his paper? Flogged! Huffle Scuffle told me I was a felon, but that wasn't half so bad as this fellow;" and Johnny kicked the newspaper across the room.

"Indite him for a libel," said Fisher.

"Particularly for saying you wanted to marry a countess's daughter," said another clerk.

"I never heard such a scandal in my life," declared a third; "and then to say that the girl wouldn't look at you."

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But not the less was it felt by all in the office that Johnny Eames was becoming a leading man among them, and that he was one with whom each of them would be pleased to be intimate. And even among the grandees this affair of the railway station did him no real harm. It was known that Crosbie had deserved to be thrashed, and known that Eames had thrashed him. It was all very well for Sir Raffle Buffle to talk of police magistrates and misdemeanors, but all the world at the Income-tax Office knew very well that Eames had come out from that affair with his head upright, and his right foot foremost.

"Never mind about the newspaper," a thoughtful old senior clerk said to him. "As he did get the licking and you didn't, you can afford to laugh at the newspaper."

"And you wouldn't write to the editor?"

"No, no; certainly not. No one thinks of defending himself to a newspaper except an ass;—unless it be some fellow who wants to have his name puffed. You may write what's as true as the gospel, but they'll know how to make fun of it."

Johnny therefore gave up his idea of an indignant letter to the editor, but he felt that he was bound to give some explanation of the whole matter to Lord De Guest. The affair had happened as he was coming from the earl's house, and all his own concerns had now been made so much a matter of interest to his kind friend, that he thought that he could not with propriety leave the earl to learn from the newspapers either the facts or the falsehoods. And, therefore, before he left his office he wrote the following letter:—

Income-Tax Office, December 29, 186—.

My Lord,—

He thought a good deal about the style in which he ought to address the peer, never having hitherto written to him. He began, "My dear Lord," on one sheet of paper, and then put it aside, thinking that it looked over-bold.

My Lord,—

As you have been so very kind to me, I feel that I ought to tell you what happened the other morning at the railway station, as I was coming back from Guestwick. That scoundrel Crosbie got into the same carriage with me at the Barchester Junction, and sat opposite to me all the way up to London. I did not speak a word to him, or he to me; but when he got out at the Paddington Station, I thought I ought not to let him go away, so I—— I can't say that I thrashed him as I wished to do; but I made an attempt, and I did give him a black eye. A whole quantity of policemen got round us, and I hadn't a fair chance. I know you will think that I was wrong, and perhaps I was; but what could I do when he sat opposite to me there for two hours, looking as though he thought himself the finest fellow in all London?

They've put a horrible paragraph into one of the newspapers, saying that I got so "flogged" that I haven't been able to stir since. It is an atrocious falsehood, as is all the rest of the newspaper account. I was not touched. He was not nearly so bad a customer as the bull, and seemed to take it all very quietly. I must acknowledge, though, that he didn't get such a beating as he deserved.

Your friend Sir R. B. sent for me this morning, and told me I was a felon. I

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didn't seem to care much for that, for he might as well have called me a murderer or a burglar; but I shall care very much indeed if I have made you angry with me. But what I most fear is the anger of some one else,—at Allington.

Believe me to be, my Lord,

Yours very much obliged and most sincerely,

JOHN EAMES.

"I knew he'd do it if ever he got the opportunity," said the earl when he had read his letter; and he walked about his room striking his hands together, and then thrusting his thumbs into his waistcoat-pockets. "I knew he was made of the right stuff," and the earl rejoiced greatly in the prowess of his favourite. "I'd have done it myself if I'd seen him. I do believe I would." Then he went back to the breakfast-room and told Lady Julia. "What do you think?" said he; "Johnny Eames has come across Crosbie, and given him a desperate beating."

"No!" said Lady Julia, putting down her newspaper and spectacles, and expressing by the light of her eyes anything but Christian horror at the wickedness of the deed.

"But he has, though. I knew he would if he saw him."

"Beaten him! Actually beaten him!"

"Sent him home to Lady Alexandrina with two black eyes."

"Two black eyes! What a young pickle! But did he get hurt himself?"

"Not a scratch, he says."

"And what'll they do to him?"

"Nothing. Crosbie won't be fool enough to do anything. A man becomes an outlaw when he plays such a game as he has played. Anybody's hand may be raised against him with impunity. He can't show his face, you know. He can't come forward and answer questions as to what he has done. There are offences which the law can't touch, but which outrage public feeling so strongly that any one may take upon himself the duty of punishing them. He has been thrashed, and that will stick to him till he dies."

"Do tell Johnny from me that I hope he didn't get hurt," said Lady Julia. The old lady could not absolutely congratulate him on his feat of arms, but she did the next thing to it.

But the earl did congratulate him, with a full open assurance of his approval.

"I hope," he said, "I should have done the same at your age, under similar circumstances, and I'm very glad that he proved less difficult than the bull. I'm quite sure you didn't want any one to help you with Master Crosbie. As for that other person at Allington, if I understand such matters at all, I think she will forgive you." It may, however, be a question whether the earl did understand such matters at all. And then he added, in a postscript: "When you write to me again,—and don't be long first, begin your letter, 'My dear Lord De Guest,'—that is the proper way."

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Heinrich Heine.

"I know not if I deserve that a laurel-wreath should one day be laid on my coffin. Poetry, dearly as I have loved it, has always been to me but a divine plaything. I have never attached any great value to poetical fame; and I trouble myself very little whether people praise my verses or blame them. But lay on my coffin a *sword:* for I was a brave soldier in the war of liberation of humanity."

Heine had his full share of love of fame, and cared quite as much as his brethren of the *genus irritabile* whether people praised his verses or blamed them. And he was very little of a hero. Posterity will certainly decorate his tomb with the emblem of the laurel rather than with the emblem of the sword. Still, for his contemporaries, for us, for the Europe of the present century, he is significant chiefly for the reason which he himself in the words just quoted assigns. He is significant because he was, if not pre-eminently a brave, yet a brilliant, a most effective soldier in the war of liberation of humanity.

To ascertain the master current in the literature of an epoch, and to distinguish this from all minor currents, is the critic's highest function; in discharging it he shows how far he possesses the most indispensable quality of his office—justness of spirit. The living writer who has done most to make England acquainted with German authors, a man of genius, but to whom precisely this one quality of justness of spirit is perhaps wanting,—I mean Mr. Carlyle,—seems to me in the result of his labours on German literature to afford a proof how very necessary to the critic this quality is. Mr. Carlyle has spoken admirably of Goethe; but then Goethe stands before all men's eyes, the manifest centre of German literature; and from this central source many rivers flow. Which of these rivers is the main stream? which of the courses of spirit which we see active in Goethe is the course which will most influence the future, and attract and be continued by the most powerful of Goethe's successors? —that is the question. Mr. Carlyle attaches, it seems to me, far too much importance to the romantic school of Germany—Tieck, Novalis, Jean Paul Richter,—and gives to these writers, really gifted as two, at any rate, of them are, an undue prominence. These writers, and others with aims and a general tendency the same as theirs, are not the real inheritors and continuators of Goethe's power; the current of their activity is not the main current of German literature after Goethe. Far more in Heine's works flows this main current; Heine, far more than Tieck or Jean Paul Richter, is the continuator of that which, in Goethe's varied activity, is the most powerful and vital; on Heine, of all German authors who

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survived Goethe, incomparably the largest portion of Goethe's mantle fell. I do not forget that when Mr. Carlyle was dealing with German literature, Heine, though he was clearly risen above the horizon, had not shone forth with all his strength; I do not forget, too, that after ten or twenty years many things may come out plain before the critic which before were hard to be discerned by him; and assuredly no one would dream of imputing it as a fault to Mr. Carlyle that twenty years ago he mistook the central current in German literature, overlooked the rising Heine, and attached undue importance to that romantic school which Heine was to destroy; one may rather note it as a misfortune, sent perhaps as a delicate chastisement to a critic, who—man of genius as he is, and no one recognizes his genius more admiringly than I do—has, for the functions of the critic, a little too much of the self-will and eccentricity of a genuine son of Great Britain.

Heine is noteworthy, because he is the most important German successor and continuator of Goethe in Goethe's most important line of activity. And which of Goethe's lines of activity is this? His line of activity as "a soldier in the war of liberation of humanity."

Heine himself would hardly have admitted this affiliation, though he was far too powerful-minded a man to decry, with some of the vulgar German liberals, Goethe's genius. "The wind of the Paris Revolution," he writes after the three days of 1830, "blew about the candles a little in the dark night of Germany, so that the red curtains of a German throne or two caught fire; but the old watchmen, who do the police of the German kingdoms, are already bringing out the fire-engines, and will keep the candles closer snuffed for the future. Poor, fast-bound German people, lose not all heart in thy bonds! The fashionable coating of ice melts off from my heart, my soul quivers and my eyes burn, and that is a disadvantageous state of things for a writer, who should control his subject-matter and keep himself beautifully objective, as the artistic school would have us, and as Goethe has done; he has come to be eighty years old doing this, and minister, and in good condition—poor German people! that is thy greatest man!"

But hear Goethe himself: "If I were to say what I had really been to the Germans in general, and to the young German poets in particular, I should say I had been their *Liberator*."

Modern times find themselves with an immense system of institutions, established facts, accredited dogmas, customs, rules, which have come to them from times not modern. In this system their life has to be carried forward, yet they have a sense that this system is not of their own creation, that it by no means corresponds exactly with the wants of their actual life, that, for them, it is customary, not rational. The awakening of this sense is the awakening of the modern spirit. The modern spirit is now awake almost everywhere; the sense of want of correspondence between the forms of modern Europe and its spirit, between the new wine of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the old bottles of

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the eleventh and twelfth centuries, or even of the sixteenth and seventeenth, almost every one now perceives; it is no longer dangerous to affirm that this want of correspondence exists; people are even beginning to be shy of denying it. To remove this want of correspondence is beginning to be the settled endeavour of most persons of good sense. Dissolvents of the old European system of dominant ideas and facts we must all be, all of us who have any power of working; what we have to study is that we may not be acrid dissolvents of it.

And how did Goethe, that grand dissolvent in an age when there were fewer of them than at present, proceed in his task of dissolution, of liberation of the modern European from the old routine? He shall tell us himself. "Through me the German poets have become aware that, as man must live from within outwards, so the artist must work from within outwards, seeing that, make what contortions he will, he can only bring to light his own individuality. I can clearly mark where this influence of mine has made itself felt; there arises out of it a kind of poetry of Nature, and only in this way is it possible to be original."

My voice shall never be joined to those which decry Goethe, and if it is said that the foregoing is a lame and impotent conclusion to Goethe's declaration that he had been the liberator of the Germans in general, and of the young German poets in particular, I say it is not. Goethe's profound, imperturbable naturalism is absolutely fatal to all routine thinking; he puts the standard, once for all, inside every man instead of outside him; when he is told, such a thing must be so, there is immense authority and custom in favour of its being so, it has been held to be so for a thousand years, he answers with Olympian politeness, "But *is* it so? is it so to *me?*" Nothing could be more really subversive of the foundations on which the old European order rested; and it may be remarked that no persons are so radically detached from this order, no persons so thoroughly modern, as those who have felt Goethe's influence most deeply. If it is said that Goethe professes to have in this way deeply influenced but a few persons, and those persons poets, one may answer that he could have taken no better way to secure, in the end, the ear of the world; for poetry is simply the most beautiful, impressive, and widely effective mode of saying things, and hence its importance. Nevertheless the process of liberation, as Goethe worked it, though sure, is undoubtedly slow; he came, as Heine says, to be eighty years old in thus working it, and at the end of that time the old Middle-Age machine was still creaking on, the thirty German courts and their chamberlains subsisted in all their glory; Goethe himself was a minister, and the visible triumph of the modern spirit over prescription and routine seemed as far off as ever. It was the year 1830; the German sovereigns had passed the preceding fifteen years in breaking the promises of freedom they had made to their subjects when they wanted their help in the final struggle with Napoleon. Great events were happening in France; the revolution, defeated in 1815, had arisen from its defeat, and was wresting

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from its adversaries the power. Heinrich Heine, a young man of genius, born at Hamburg, and with all the culture of Germany, but by race a Jew; with warm sympathies for France, whose revolution had given to his race the rights of citizenship, and whose rule had been, as is well known, popular in the Rhine provinces, where he passed his youth; with a passionate admiration for the great French Emperor, with a passionate contempt for the sovereigns who had overthrown him, for their agents, and for their policy—Heinrich Heine was in 1830 in no humour for any such gradual process of liberation from the old order of things as that which Goethe had followed. His counsel was for open war. With that terrible modern weapon, the pen, in his hand, he passed the remainder of his life in one fierce battle. What was that battle? the reader will ask. It was a life and death battle with Philistinism.

Philistinism—we have not the expression in English. Perhaps we have not the word because we have so much of the thing. At Soli, I imagine, they did not talk of solecisms; and here, at the very headquarters of Goliath, nobody talks of Philistinism. The French have adopted the term *épicier*, grocer, to designate the sort of being whom the Germans designate by the term Philistine; but the French term —besides that it casts a slur upon a respectable class, composed of living and susceptible members, while the original Philistines are dead and buried long ago—is really, I think, in itself much less apt and expressive than the German term. Efforts have been made to obtain in English some term equivalent to *Philister* or *épicier;* Mr. Carlyle has made several such efforts: "respectability with its thousand gigs," he says;—well, the occupant of every one of those gigs is, Mr. Carlyle means, a Philistine. However, the word *respectable* is far too valuable a word to be thus perverted from its proper meaning; if the English are ever to have a word for the thing we are speaking of—and so prodigious are the changes which the modern spirit is introducing, that even we English shall perhaps one day come to want such a word—I think we had much better take the term *Philistine* itself.

Philistine must have originally meant, in the mind of those who invented the nickname, a strong, dogged, unenlightened opponent of the chosen people, of the children of the light. The party of change, the would-be remodellers of the old traditional European order, the invokers of reason against custom, the representatives of the modern spirit in every sphere where it is applicable, regarded themselves, with the robust self-confidence natural to reformers, as a chosen people, as children of the light. They regarded their adversaries as humdrum people, slaves to routine, enemies to the light; stupid and oppressive, but at the same time very strong. This explains the love which Heine, that Paladin of the modern spirit, has for France; it explains the preference which he gives to France over Germany: "the French," he says, "are the chosen people of the new religion, its first gospels and dogmas have been drawn up in their language; Paris is the new Jerusalem, and the Rhine is the Jordan

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which divides the consecrated land of freedom from the land of the Philistines." He means that the French, as a people, have shown more accessibility to ideas than any other people; that prescription and routine have had less hold upon them than upon any other people; that they have shown most readiness to move and to alter at the bidding (real or supposed) of reason. This explains, too, the detestation which Heine had for the English: "I might settle in England," he says in his exile, "if it were not that I should find there two things, coal-smoke and Englishmen; I cannot abide either." What he hated in the English was the "ächt-brittische Beschränktheit," as he calls it—the *genuine British narrowness.* In truth, the English, profoundly as they have modified the old Middle-Age order, great as is the liberty which they have secured for themselves, have in all their changes proceeded, to use a familiar expression, by the rule of thumb; what was intolerably inconvenient to them they have suppressed, and as they have suppressed it not because it was irrational, but because it was practically inconvenient, they have seldom in suppressing it appealed to reason, but always, if possible, to some precedent, or form, or letter, which served as a convenient instrument for their purpose, and which saved them from the necessity of recurring to general principles. They have thus become, in a certain sense, of all people the most inaccessible to ideas, and the most impatient of them; inaccessible to them because of their want of familiarity with them, and impatient of them because they have got on so well without them, that they despise those who, not having got on so well as themselves, still make a fuss for what they themselves have done so well without. But there has certainly followed from hence, in this country, somewhat of a general depression of pure intelligence: Philistia has come to be thought by us the true Land of Promise, and it is anything but that; the born lover of ideas, the born hater of commonplaces, must feel, in this country, that the sky over his head is of brass and iron. The enthusiast for the idea, for reason, values reason, the idea, in and for themselves; he values them, irrespectively of the practical conveniences which their triumph may obtain for him; and the man who regards the possession of these practical conveniences as something sufficient in itself, something which compensates for the absence or surrender of the idea, of reason, is, in his eyes, a Philistine. This is why Heine so often and so mercilessly attacks the liberals; much as he hates conservatism he hates Philistinism even more, and whoever attacks conservatism itself ignobly, not as a child of light, not in the name of the idea, is a Philistine. Our Cobbett is thus for him, much as he disliked our clergy and aristocracy whom Cobbett attacked, a Philistine with six fingers on every hand, and on every foot six toes, four-and-twenty in number: a Philistine, the staff of whose spear is like a weaver's beam. Thus he speaks of him:—

While I translate Cobbett's words, the man himself comes bodily before my mind's eye, as I saw him at that uproarious dinner at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, with his scolding red face and his radical laugh, in which venomous hate mingles with a

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mocking exultation at his enemies' surely approaching downfall. He is a chained cur, who falls with equal fury on every one whom he does not know, often bites the best friend of the house in his calves, barks incessantly, and just because of this incessantness of his barking cannot get listened to, even when he barks at a real thief. Therefore, the distinguished thieves who plunder England do not think it necessary to throw the growling Cobbett a bone to stop his mouth. This makes the dog furiously savage, and he shows all his hungry teeth. Poor old Cobbett! England's dog! I have no love for thee: for every vulgar nature my soul abhors; but thou touchest me to the inmost soul with pity, as I see how thou strainest in vain to break loose and to get at those thieves, who make off with their booty before thy very eyes, and mock at thy fruitless springs and thine impotent howling.

But, in 1830, Heine very soon found that the fire-engines of the German governments were too much for his direct efforts at incendiarism. "What demon drove me," he cries, "to write my *Reisebilder*, to edit a newspaper, to plague myself with our time and its interests, to try and shake the poor German Hodge out of his thousand years' sleep in his hole? What good did I get by it? Hodge opened his eyes, only to shut them again immediately; he yawned, only to begin snoring again the next minute louder than ever; he stretched his stiff ungainly limbs, only to sink down again directly afterwards, and lie like a dead man in the old bed of his accustomed habits. I must have rest; but where am I to find a resting-place? In Germany I can no longer stay."

This is Heine's jesting account of his own efforts to rouse Germany: now for his pathetic account of them; it is because he unites so much wit with so much pathos that he is so effective a writer:—

The Emperor Charles the Fifth sate in sore straits, in the Tyrol, encompassed by his enemies. All his knights and courtiers had forsaken him; not one came to his help. I know not if he had at that time the cheese face with which Holbein has painted him for us. But I am sure that under-lip of his, with its contempt for mankind, stuck out even more than it does in his portraits. How could he but contemn the tribe which in the sunshine of his prosperity had fawned on him so devotedly, and now, in his dark distress, left him all alone? Then suddenly his door opened, and there came in a man in disguise, and, as he threw back his cloak, the Kaiser recognized in him his faithful Conrad von der Rosen, the court jester. This man brought him comfort and counsel, and he was the court jester!

O German fatherland! dear German people! I am thy Conrad von der Rosen. The man whose proper business was to amuse thee, and who in good times should have catered only for thy mirth, makes his way into thy prison in time of need; here under my cloak, I bring thee thy sceptre and crown; dost thou not recognize me, my Kaiser? If I cannot free thee, I will at least comfort thee, and thou shalt at least have one with thee who will prattle with thee about thy sorest affliction, and whisper courage to thee, and love thee, and whose best joke and best blood shall be at thy service. For thou, my people, art the true Kaiser, the true lord of the land; thy will is sovereign, and more legitimate far than that purple *Tel est notre plaisir*, which invokes a divine right with no better warrant than the anointings of shaven and shorn jugglers; thy will, my people, is the sole rightful source of power. Though now thou liest down in thy bonds, yet in the end will thy rightful cause prevail; the day of deliverance is at hand, a new time is beginning. My Kaiser, the night is over, and out there glows the ruddy dawn.

"Conrad von der Rosen, my fool, thou art mistaken; perhaps thou takest a headsman's gleaming axe for the sun, and the red of dawn is only blood."

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"No, my Kaiser, it is the sun, though it is rising in the west; these six thousand years it has always risen in the east; it is high time there should come a change."

"Conrad von der Rosen, my fool, thou hast lost the bells out of thy red cap, and it has now such an odd look, that red cap of thine!"

"Ah, my Kaiser, thy distress has made me shake my head so hard and fierce, that the fool's bells have dropped off my cap; the cap is none the worse for that."

"Conrad von der Rosen, my fool, what is that noise of breaking and cracking outside there?"

"Hush! that is the saw and the carpenter's axe, and soon the doors of thy prison will be burst open, and thou wilt be free, my Kaiser!"

"Am I then really Kaiser? Ah, I forgot, it is the fool who tells me so!"

"Oh, sigh not, my dear master, the air of thy prison makes thee so desponding: when once thou hast got thy rights again, thou wilt feel once more the bold imperial blood in thy veins, and thou wilt be proud like a Kaiser, and violent, and gracious, and unjust, and smiling, and ungrateful, as princes are."

"Conrad von der Rosen, my fool, when I am free, what wilt thou do then?"

"I will then sew new bells on to my cap."

"And how shall I recompense thy fidelity?"

"Ah, dear master, by not leaving me to die in a ditch!"

I wish to mark Heine's place in modern European literature, the scope of his activity, and his value. I cannot attempt to give here a detailed account of his life, or a description of his separate works. In May, 1831, he went over his Jordan, the Rhine, and fixed himself in his new Jerusalem, Paris. There, thenceforward, he lived, going in general to some French watering-place in the summer, but making only one or two short visits to Germany during the rest of his life. His works, in verse and prose, succeeded each other without stopping; a collected edition of them, filling seven closely-printed octavo volumes, has been published in America; in the collected editions of few people's works is there so little to skip. Those who wish for a single good specimen of him should read his first important work, the work which made his reputation, the *Reisebilder*, or "Travelling Sketches;" prose and verse, wit and seriousness, are mingled in it, and the mingling of these is characteristic of Heine, and is nowhere to be seen practised more naturally and happily than in his *Reisebilder*. In 1847 his health, which till then had always been perfectly good, gave way. He had a kind of paralytic stroke. His malady proved to be a softening of the spinal marrow: it was incurable; it made rapid progress. In May, 1848, not a year after his first attack, he went out of doors for the last time; but his disease took more than eight years to kill him. For nearly eight years he lay helpless on a couch, with the use of his limbs gone, wasted almost to the proportions of a child, wasted so that a woman could carry him about; the sight of one eye lost, that of the other greatly dimmed, and requiring, that it might be exercised, to have the palsied eyelid lifted and held up by the finger; all this, and suffering, besides this, at short intervals, paroxysms of nervous agony. I have said he was not preeminently brave; but in the astonishing force of spirit with which he retained his activity of mind, even his gaiety, amid all this suffering,

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and went on composing with undiminished fire to the last, he was truly brave. Nothing could clog that aërial lightness. "Pouvez-vous siffler?" his doctor asked him one day, when he was almost at his last gasp;—"siffler," as every one knows, has the double meaning of *to whistle* and *to hiss*:—"Hélas! non," was his whispered answer; "pas même une comédie de M. Scribe!" M. Scribe is, or was, the favourite dramatist of the French Philistine. "My nerves," he said to some one who asked him about them in 1855, the year of the Great Exhibition in Paris, "my nerves are of that quite singularly remarkable miserableness of nature, that I am convinced they would get at the Exhibition the grand medal for pain and misery." He read all the medical books which treated of his complaint. "But," said he to some one who found him thus engaged, "what good this reading is to do me I don't know, except that it will qualify me to give lectures in heaven on the ignorance of doctors on earth about diseases of the spinal marrow." What a matter of grim seriousness are our own ailments to most of us! yet with this gaiety Heine treated his to the end. That end, so long in coming, came at last. Heine died on the 17th of February, 1856, at the age of fifty-eight. By his will he forbade that his remains should be transported to Germany. He lies buried in the cemetery of Montmartre, at Paris.

His direct political action was null, and this is neither to be wondered at nor regretted; direct political action is not the true function of literature, and Heine was a born man of letters. Even in his favourite France the turn taken by public affairs was not at all what he wished, though he read French politics by no means as we in England, most of us, read them. He thought things were tending there to the triumph of communism; and to a champion of the idea like Heine, what there is gross and narrow in communism was very repulsive. "It is all of no use," he cried on his death-bed, "the future belongs to our enemies, the Communists, and Louis Napoleon is their John the Baptist." "And yet"—he added with all his old love for that remarkable entity, so full of attraction for him, so profoundly unknown in England, the French people—"do not believe that God lets all this go forward merely as a grand comedy. Even though the Communists deny him to-day, he knows better than they do, that a time will come when they will learn to believe in him." After 1831 his hopes of soon upsetting the German governments had died away, and his propagandism took another, a more truly literary, character. It took the character of an intrepid application of the modern spirit to literature. To the ideas with which the burning questions of modern life filled him, he made all his subject-matter minister. He touched all the great points in the career of the human race, and here he but followed the tendency of the wide culture of Germany; but he touched them with a wand which brought them all under a light where the modern eye cares most to see them, and here he gave a lesson to the culture of Germany,—so wide, so impartial, that it is apt to become slack and powerless, and to lose itself in its materials for

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want of a strong central idea round which to group all its ideas. So the mystic and romantic school of Germany lost itself in the Middle Ages, was overpowered by their influence, came to ruin by its vain dreams of renewing them. Heine, with a far profounder sense of the mystic and romantic charm of the Middle Age than Görres, or Brentano, or Arnim, Heine the chief romantic poet of Germany, is yet also much more than a romantic poet; he is a great modern poet, he is not conquered by the Middle Age, he has a talisman by which he can feel, along with but above the power of the fascinating Middle Age itself, the power of modern ideas.

A French critic of Heine thinks he has said enough in saying that Heine proclaimed in German countries, with beat of drum, the ideas of 1789, and that at the cheerful noise of his drum the ghosts of the Middle Age took to flight. But this is rather too French an account of the matter. Germany, that vast mine of ideas, had no need to import ideas, as such, from any foreign country; and if Heine had carried ideas, as such, from France into Germany, he would but have been carrying coals to Newcastle. But that for which France, far less meditative than Germany, is eminent, is the prompt, ardent, and practical application of an idea, when she seizes it, in all departments of human activity which admit it. And that in which Germany most fails, and by failing in which she appears so helpless and impotent, is just this practical application of her innumerable ideas. "When Candide," says Heine himself, "came to Eldorado, he saw in the streets a number of boys who were playing with gold-nuggets instead of marbles. This degree of luxury made him imagine that they must be the king's children, and he was not a little astonished when he found that in Eldorado gold-nuggets are of no more value than marbles are with us, and that the school-boys play with them. A similar thing happened to a friend of mine, a foreigner, when he came to Germany and first read German books. He was perfectly astounded at the wealth of ideas which he found in them; but he soon remarked that ideas in Germany are as plentiful as gold-nuggets in Eldorado, and that those writers whom he had taken for intellectual princes, were in reality only common school-boys." Heine was, as he calls himself, a "Child of the French Revolution," an "Initiator," because he vigorously assured the Germans that ideas were not counters or marbles, to be played with for their own sake; because he exhibited in literature modern ideas applied with the utmost freedom, clearness, and originality. And therefore he declared that the great task of his life had been the endeavour to establish a cordial relation between France and Germany. It is because he thus operates a junction between the French spirit and German ideas and German culture, that he founds something new, opens a fresh period, and deserves the attention of criticism far more than the German poets his contemporaries, who merely continue an old period till it expires. It may be predicted that in the literature of other countries, too, the French spirit is destined to make its influence felt as an element,

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in alliance with the native spirit, of novelty and movement, as it has made its influence felt in German literature; fifty years hence a critic in the *Cornhill Magazine* will be demonstrating to our grandchildren how the phenomenon has come to pass.

We in England, in our great burst of literature during the first thirty years of the present century, had no manifestation of the modern spirit, as this spirit manifests itself in Goethe's works or Heine's. And the reason is not far to seek. We had neither the German wealth of ideas, nor the French enthusiasm for applying ideas. There reigned in the mass of the nation that inveterate inaccessibility to ideas, that Philistinism—to use the German nickname—which reacts even on the individual genius that is exempt from it. In our greatest literary epoch, that of the Elizabethan age, English society at large was accessible to ideas, was permeated by them, was vivified by them to a degree which has never been reached in England since. Hence the unique greatness in English literature of Shakspeare and his contemporaries; they were powerfully upheld by the intellectual life of their nation; they applied freely in literature the then modern ideas—the ideas of the Renaissance and the Reformation. A few years afterwards the great English middle class, the kernel of the nation, the class whose intelligent sympathy had upheld a Shakspeare, entered the prison of Puritanism, and had the key turned on its spirit there for two hundred years. *He enlargeth a nation*, says Job, *and straiteneth it again.* In the literary movement of the beginning of the nineteenth century the signal attempt to apply freely the modern spirit was made in England by two members of the aristocratic class, Byron and Shelley. Aristocracies are, as such, naturally impenetrable by ideas; but their individual members have a high courage and a turn for breaking bounds; and a man of genius, who is the born child of the idea, happening to be born in the aristocratic ranks, chafes against the obstacles which prevent him from freely developing it. But Byron and Shelley did not succeed in their attempt freely to apply the modern spirit in English literature; they could not succeed in it; the resistance to baffle them, the want of intelligent sympathy to guide and uphold them, were too great. Their literary creation, compared with the literary creation of Shakspeare and Spenser, compared with the literary creation of Goethe and Heine, is a failure. The best literary creation of that time in England proceeded from men who did not make the same bold attempt as Byron and Shelley. What, in fact, was the career of the chief English men of letters, their contemporaries? The greatest of them, Wordsworth, retired (in Middle-Age phrase) into a monastery. I mean, he plunged himself in the inward life, he voluntarily cut himself off from the modern spirit. Coleridge took to opium. Scott became the historiographer royal of feudalism. Keats passionately gave himself up to a sensuous genius, to his faculty for interpreting nature; and he died of consumption at twenty-five. Wordsworth, Scott, and Keats have left admirable works; far more solid and complete works than those which Byron and Shelley have left. But their works

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have this defect—they do not belong to that which is the main current of the literature of modern epochs, they do not apply modern ideas to life; they constitute, therefore, *minor currents*, and all other literary work of our day, however popular, which has the same defect, also constitutes but a minor current. Byron and Shelley will be long remembered, long after the inadequacy of their actual work is clearly recognized, for their passionate, their Titanic effort to flow in the main stream of modern literature; their names will be greater than their writings; *stat magni nominis umbra*.

Heine's literary good fortune was greater than that of Byron and Shelley. His theatre of operations was Germany, whose Philistinism does not consist in her want of ideas, or in her inaccessibility to ideas, for she teems with them and loves them, but, as I have said, in her feeble and hesitating application of modern ideas to life. Heine's intense modernism, his absolute freedom, his utter rejection of stock classicism and stock romanticism, his bringing all things under the point of view of the nineteenth century, were understood and laid to heart by Germany, through virtue of her immense, tolerant intellectualism, much as there was in all Heine said to affront and wound Germany. The wit and ardent modern spirit of France Heine joined to the culture, the sentiment, the thought of Germany. This is what makes him so remarkable; his wonderful clearness, lightness, and freedom, united with such power of feeling and width of range. Is there anywhere keener wit than in his story of the French abbé who was his tutor, and who wanted to get from him that *la religion* is French for *der Glaube:* "Six times did he ask me the question: 'Henry, what is *der Glaube* in French?' and six times, and each time with a greater burst of tears, did I answer him—'It is *le crédit*.' And at the seventh time, his face purple with rage, the infuriated examiner screamed out—'It is *la religion;*' and a rain of cuffs descended upon me, and all the other boys burst out laughing. Since that day I have never been able to hear *la religion* mentioned, without feeling a tremor run through my back and my cheeks grow red with shame." Or in that comment on the fate of Professor Saalfeld, who had been addicted to writing furious pamphlets against Napoleon, and who was a professor at Göttingen, a great seat, according to Heine, of pedantry and Philistinism:—"It is curious," says Heine, "the three greatest adversaries of Napoleon have all of them ended miserably. Castlereagh cut his own throat; Louis the Eighteenth rotted upon his throne; and Professor Saalfeld is still a professor at Göttingen." It is impossible to go beyond that.

What wit, again, in that saying which every one has heard: "The Englishman loves liberty like his lawful wife, the Frenchman loves her like his mistress, the German loves her like his old grandmother." But the turn Heine gives to this incomparable saying is not so well known; and it is by that turn he shows himself the born poet he is, full of delicacy and tenderness, of inexhaustible resource, infinitely new and striking:—

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And yet, after all, no one can ever tell how things may fall out. The grumpy Englishman, in an ill-temper with his wife, is capable of some day putting a rope round her neck, and taking her to be sold at Smithfield. The inconstant Frenchman may become unfaithful to his adored mistress, and be seen fluttering about the Palais Royal after another. *But the German will never quite abandon his old grandmother;* he will always keep for her a nook by the chimney-corner, where she can tell her fairy stories to the listening children.

Is it possible to touch more delicately and happily both the weakness and the strength of Germany—pedantic, simple, enslaved, free, ridiculous, admirable Germany?

And Heine's verse—his *Lieder?* Oh, the comfort, after dealing with French people of genius, irresistibly impelled to try and express themselves in verse, launching out into a deep which destiny has sown with so many rocks for them,—the comfort of coming to a man of genius, who finds in verse his freest and most perfect expression, whose voyage over the deep of poetry destiny makes smooth! After the rhythm, to us, at any rate, with the German paste in our composition, so deeply unsatisfying, of—

> Ah! que me dites-vous, et que vous dit mon âme?
> Que dit le ciel à l'aube et la flamme à la flamme?

what a blessing to arrive at rhythms like—

> Take, oh, take those lips away,
> That so sweetly were forsworn—

or—

> Siehst sehr sterbeblässlich aus,
> Doch getrost! du bist zu Haus—

in which one's soul can take pleasure! The magic of Heine's poetical form is incomparable; he chiefly uses a form of old German popular poetry, a ballad form, which has more rapidity and grace than any ballad form of ours; he employs this form with the most exquisite lightness and ease, and yet it has at the same time the inborn fulness, pathos, and old-world charm of all true forms of popular poetry. Thus in Heine's poetry, too, one perpetually blends the impression of French modernism and clearness with that of German sentiment and fulness; and to give this blended impression is, as I have said, Heine's great characteristic. To feel it, one must read him; he gives it in his form as well as in his contents, and by translation I can only reproduce it so far as his contents give it. But even the contents of many of his poems are capable of giving a certain sense of it. Here, for instance, is a poem in which he makes his profession of faith to an innocent beautiful soul, a sort of Gretchen, the child of some simple mining people having their hut among the pines at the foot of the Hartz Mountains, who reproaches him with not holding the old articles of the Christian creed:—

> Ah, my child, while I was yet a little boy, while I yet sate upon my mother's knee, I believed in God the Father, who rules up there in Heaven, good and great;
>
> Who created the beautiful earth, and the beautiful men and women thereon; who ordained for sun, moon, and stars their courses.

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When I got bigger, my child, I comprehended yet a great deal more than this, and comprehended, and grew intelligent; and I believe on the Son also;

On the beloved Son, who loved us, and revealed love to us; and for his reward, as always happens, was crucified by the people.

Now, when I am grown up, have read much, have travelled much, my heart swells within me, and with my whole heart I believe on the Holy Ghost.

The greatest miracles were of his working, and still greater miracles doth he even now work; he burst in sunder the oppressor's stronghold, and he burst in sunder the bondsman's yoke.

He heals old death-wounds, and renews the old right; all mankind are one race of noble equals before him.

He chases away the evil clouds and the dark cobwebs of the brain, which have spoilt love and joy for us, which day and night have loured on us.

A thousand knights, well harnessed, has the Holy Ghost chosen out to fulfil his will, and he has put courage into their souls.

Their good swords flash, their bright banners wave; what, thou wouldst give much, my child, to look upon such gallant knights?

Well, on me, my child, look! kiss me, and look boldly upon me! one of those knights of the Holy Ghost am I.

One has only to turn over the pages of his *Romancero*—a collection of poems written in the first years of his illness, with his whole power and charm still in them, and not, like his latest poems of all, painfully touched by the air of his *Matrazzen-gruft*, his mattress-grave—to see Heine's width of range; the most varied figures succeed one another, Rhampsinitus, Edith with the swan neck, Charles the First, Marie Antoinette, King David, a heroine of *Mabille*, Melisanda of Tripoli, Richard Cœur de Lion, Pedro the Cruel, Firdusi, Cortes, Dr. Döllinger; but never does Heine attempt to be *hübsch objectiv*, "beautifully objective," to become in spirit an old Egyptian, or an old Hebrew, or a Middle-Age knight, or a Spanish adventurer, or an English royalist; he always remains Heinrich Heine, a son of the nineteenth century. To give you a notion of his tone I will quote a few stanzas at the end of the *Spanish Atridæ*, in which he describes, in the character of a visitor at the court of Henry of Transtamare at Segovia, Henry's treatment of the children of his brother, Pedro the Cruel. Don Diego Albuquerque, his neighbour, strolls after dinner through the castle with him:—

In the cloister-passage, which leads to the kennels where are kept the king's hounds, that with their growling and yelping let you know a long way off where they are,

There I saw, built into the wall, and with a strong iron grating for its outer face, a cell like a cage.

Two human figures sate therein, two young boys; chained by the leg, they crouched in the dirty straw.

Hardly twelve years old seemed the one, the other not much older; their faces fair and noble, but pale and wan with sickness.

They were all in rags, almost naked; and their lean bodies showed wounds, the marks of ill-usage; both of them shivered with fever.

They looked up at me out of the depth of their misery: "Who," I cried in horror to Don Diego, "are these pictures of wretchedness?"

Don Diego seemed embarrassed; he looked round to see that no one was listening; then he gave a deep sigh, and at last, putting on the easy tone of a man of the world, he said:

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"These are a pair of king's sons, who were early left orphans; the name of their father was King Pedro, the name of their mother Maria de Padilla.

"After the great battle of Navarette, when Henry of Transtamare had relieved his brother, King Pedro, of the troublesome burden of the crown,

"And likewise of that still more troublesome burden, which is called life, then Don Henry's victorious magnanimity had to deal with his brother's children.

"He has adopted them, as an uncle should; and he has given them free quarters in his own castle.

"The room which he has assigned to them is certainly rather small, but then it is cool in summer, and not intolerably cold in winter.

"Their fare is rye bread, which tastes as sweet as if the goddess Ceres had baked it express for her beloved Proserpine.

"Not unfrequently, too, he sends a scullion to them with garbanzos, and then the young gentlemen know that it is Sunday in Spain.

"But it is not Sunday every day, and garbanzos do not come every day; and the master of the hounds gives them the treat of his whip.

"For the master of the hounds, who has under his superintendence the kennels and the pack, and the nephews' cage also,

"Is the unfortunate husband of that lemon-faced woman with the white ruff, whom we remarked to-day at dinner.

"And she scolds so sharp, that often her husband snatches his whip, and rushes down here, and gives it to the dogs and to the poor little boys.

"But his majesty has expressed his disapproval of such proceedings, and has given orders that for the future his nephews are to be treated differently from the dogs.

"He has determined no longer to entrust the disciplining of his nephews to a mercenary stranger, but to carry it out with his own hands."

Don Diego stopped abruptly; for the seneschal of the castle joined us, and politely expressed his hope that we had dined to our satisfaction.

Observe how the irony of the whole of that, finishing with the grim innuendo of the last stanza but one, is at once truly masterly and truly modern.

No account of Heine is complete which does not notice the Jewish element in him. His race he treated with the same freedom with which he treated everything else, but he derived a great force from it, and no one knew this better than he himself. He has excellently pointed out how in the sixteenth century there was a double renaissance—a Hellenic renaissance and a Hebrew renaissance—and how both have been great powers ever since. He himself had in him both the spirit of Greece and the spirit of Judea; both these spirits reach the infinite, which is the true goal of all poetry and all art—the Greek spirit by beauty, the Hebrew spirit by sublimity. By his perfection of literary form, by his love of clearness, by his love of beauty, Heine is Greek; by his intensity, by his untamableness, by his "longing which cannot be uttered," he is Hebrew. Yet what Hebrew ever treated the things of the Hebrews like this?—

There lives at Hamburg, in a one-roomed lodging in the Baker's Broad Walk, a man whose name is Moses Lump; all the week he goes about in wind and rain, with his pack on his back, to earn his few shillings; but when on Friday evening he comes home, he finds the candlestick with seven candles lighted, and the table covered with a fair white cloth, and he puts away from him his pack and his cares, and he sits down to table with his squinting wife and yet more squinting daughter, and eats fish with them, fish which has been dressed in beautiful white garlic-sauce, sings therewith the

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grandest psalms of King David, rejoices with his whole heart over the deliverance of the children of Israel out of Egypt, rejoices, too, that all the wicked ones who have done the children of Israel harm, have ended by taking themselves off; that King Pharoah, Nebuchadnezzar, Haman, Antiochus, Titus, and all such people are well dead, while he, Moses Lump, is yet alive, and eating fish with wife and daughter; and I can tell you, Doctor, the fish is delicate and the man is happy, he has no call to torment himself about culture, he sits contented in his religion and in his green bed-gown, like Diogenes in his tub, he contemplates with satisfaction his candles, which he on no account will snuff for himself; and I can tell you, if the candles burn a little dim, and the snuffers-woman, whose business it is to snuff them, is not at hand, and Rothschild the Great were at that moment to come in, with all his brokers, bill-discounters, agents, and chief clerks, with whom he conquers the world, and Rothschild were to say, "Moses Lump, ask of me what favour you will, and it shall be granted you;"—Doctor, I am convinced, Moses Lump would quietly answer, "Snuff me those candles!" and Rothschild the great would exclaim with admiration, "If I were not Rothschild, I would be Moses Lump."

There Heine shows us his own people by its comic side; in the poem of the *Princess Sabbath* he shows it to us by a more serious side. The Princess Sabbath, "the *tranquil Princess*, pearl and flower of all beauty, fair as the Queen of Sheba, Solomon's bosom friend, that blue-stocking from Ethiopia who wanted to shine by her *esprit*, and with her wise riddles made herself in the long run a bore" (with Heine the sarcastic turn is never far off), this princess has for her betrothed a prince whom sorcery has transformed into an animal of lower race, the Prince Israel.

A dog with the desires of a dog, he wallows all the week long in the filth and refuse of life, amidst the jeers of the boys in the street.

But every Friday evening, at the twilight hour, suddenly the magic passes off, and the dog becomes once more a human being.

A man with the feelings of a man, with head and heart raised aloft, in festal garb, in almost clean garb, he enters the halls of his Father.

"Hail, beloved halls of my royal Father! Ye tents of Jacob, I kiss with my lips your holy door-posts!"

Still more he shows us this serious side in his beautiful poem on Jehuda ben Halevy, a poet belonging to "the great golden age of the Arabian, Old-Spanish, Jewish school of poets," a contemporary of the troubadours:—

He, too, the hero whom we sing, Jehuda ben Halevy, too, had his lady-love; but she was of a special sort.

She was no Laura, whose eyes, mortal stars, in the cathedral on Good Friday kindled that world-renowned flame.

She was no châtelaine, who in the blooming glory of her youth presided at tourneys, and awarded the victor's crown.

No casuistess in the Gay Science was she, no lady doctrinaire, who delivered her oracles in the judgment-chamber of a Court of Love.

She, whom the Rabbi loved, was a wobegone poor darling, a mourning picture of desolation; and her name was Jerusalem.

Jehuda ben Halevy, like the Crusaders, makes his pilgrimage to Jerusalem; and there, amid the ruins, sings a song of Zion which has become famous among his people:—

That lay of pearled tears is the wide-famed Lament, which is sung in all the scattered tents of Jacob throughout the world,

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On the ninth day of the month which is called Ab, on the anniversary of Jerusalem's destruction by Titus Vespasianus.

Yes, that is the song of Sion, which Jehuda ben Halevy sang with his dying breath amid the holy ruins of Jerusalem.

Barefoot, and in penitential weeds, he sate there upon the fragment of a fallen column; down to his breast fell,

Like a grey forest, his hair; and cast a weird shadow on the face which looked out through it, his troubled pale face, with the spiritual eyes.

So he sate and sang, like unto a seer out of the fore-time to look upon: Jeremiah, the Ancient, seemed to have risen out of his grave.

But a bold Saracen came riding that way, aloft on his barb, lolling in his saddle, and brandishing a naked javelin;

Into the breast of the poor singer he plunged his deadly shaft, and shot away like a winged shadow.

Quietly flowed the Rabbi's life-blood, quietly he sang his song to an end; and his last dying sigh was Jerusalem!

Nor must Heine's sweetest note be unheard—his plaintive note, his note of melancholy. Here is a strain which came from him as he lay, in the winter night, on his "mattress-grave" at Paris, and let his thoughts wander to Germany, "the great child, entertaining herself with her Christmas-tree." "Thou tookest,"—he cries to the German exile—

Thou tookest thy flight towards sunshine and happiness; naked and poor returnest thou back. German truth, German shirts,—one gets them worn to tatters in foreign parts.

Deadly pale are thy looks, but take comfort, thou art at home; one lies warm in German earth, warm as by the old pleasant fireside.

Many a one, alas! became crippled, and could get home no more: longingly he stretches out his arms; God have mercy upon him!

God have mercy upon him! for what remain of the days of the years of his life are few and evil. "Can it be that I still actually exist? My body is so shrunk that there is hardly anything of me left but my voice, and my bed makes me think of the melodious grave of the enchanter Merlin, which is in the forest of Broceliand in Brittany, under high oaks whose tops shine like green flames to heaven. Ah, I envy thee those trees, brother Merlin, and their fresh waving; for over my mattress-grave here in Paris no green leaves rustle; and early and late I hear nothing but the rattle of carriages, hammering, scolding, and the jingle of the piano. A grave without rest, death without the privileges of the departed, who have no longer any need to spend money, or to write letters, or to compose books. What a melancholy situation!"

He died, and has left a blemished name; with his crying faults, his intemperate susceptibility, his unscrupulousness in passion, his inconceivable attacks on his enemies, his still more inconceivable attacks upon his friends, his want of generosity, his sensuality, his incessant mocking, how could it be otherwise? Not only was he not one of Mr. Carlyle's "respectable" people, he was profoundly disrespectable; and not even the merit of not being a Philistine can make up for a man's being that. To his intellectual deliverance there was an addition of something else

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wanting, and that something else was something immense; the old-fashioned, laborious, eternally needful moral deliverance. Goethe says that he was deficient in *love;* to me his weakness seems to be not so much a deficiency in love as a deficiency in self-respect, in true dignity of character. But on this negative side of one's criticism of a man of great genius, I for my part, when I have once clearly marked that this negative side is and must be there, have no pleasure in dwelling. I prefer to say of Heine something positive. He is not an adequate interpreter of the modern world. He is only a brilliant soldier in the war of liberation of humanity. But, such as he is, he is (and posterity too, I am quite sure, will say this), in the European literature of that quarter of a century which follows the death of Goethe, incomparably the most important figure.

What a spendthrift, one is tempted to cry, is Nature! With what prodigality, in the march of generations, she employs human power, content to gather almost always little result from it, sometimes none! Look at Byron, that Byron whom the present generation of Englishmen are forgetting; Byron, the greatest natural force, the greatest elementary power, I cannot but think, which has appeared in our literature since Shakspeare. And what became of this wonderful production of nature? He shattered himself, he inevitably shattered himself to pieces, against the huge black, cloud-topped, interminable precipice of British Philistinism. But Byron, it may be said, was eminent only by his genius, only by his inborn force and fire; he had not the intellectual equipment of a supreme modern poet; except for his genius he was an ordinary nineteenth-century English nobleman, with little culture and with no ideas. Well, then, look at Heine. Heine had all the culture of Germany; in his head fermented all the ideas of modern Europe. And what have we got from Heine? A half-result, for want of moral balance, and of nobleness of soul and character. That is what I say; there is so much power, so many seem able to run well, so many give promise of running well; so few reach the goal, so few are chosen. *Many are called, few chosen.*

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

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On a Medal of George the Fourth.

Before me lies a coin bearing the image and superscription of King George IV., and of the nominal value of two-and-sixpence. But an official friend at a neighbouring turnpike says the piece is hopelessly bad; and a chemist tested it, returning a like unfavourable opinion. A cabman, who had brought me from a club, left it with the club porter, appealing to the gent who gave it a pore cabby, at ever so much o'clock of a rainy night, which he hoped he would give him another. I have taken that cabman at his word. He has been provided with a sound coin. The bad piece is on the table before me, and shall have a hole drilled through it, as soon as this essay is written, by a loyal subject who does not desire to deface the Sovereign's fair image, but to protest against the rascal who has taken her name in vain. *Fid. Def.*, indeed! Is this what you call defending the faith? You dare to forge your Sovereign's name, and pass your scoundrel pewter as her silver? I wonder who you are, wretch and most consummate trickster? This forgery is so complete that even now I am deceived by it—I can't see the difference between the base and sterling metal. Perhaps this piece is a little lighter;—I don't know. A little softer:—is it? I have not bitten it, not being a connoisseur in the tasting of pewter or silver. I take the word of three honest men, though it goes against me: and though I have given two-and-sixpence worth of honest consideration for the counter, I shall not attempt to implicate anybody else in my misfortune, or transfer my ill-luck to a deluded neighbour.

I say the imitation is so curiously successful, the stamping, milling of the edges, lettering, and so forth, are so neat, that even now, when my eyes are open, I cannot see the cheat. How did those experts, the cabman, and pikeman, and tradesman, come to find it out? How do they happen to be more familiar with pewter and silver than I am? You see, I put out of the question another point which I might argue without fear of defeat, namely, the cabman's statement that I gave him this bad piece of money. Suppose every cabman who took me a shilling fare were to drive away and return presently with a bad coin and an assertion that I had given it to him? This would be absurd and mischievous; an encouragement of vice amongst men who already are subject to temptations. Being *homo*, I think if I were a cabman myself, I might sometimes stretch a furlong or two in my calculations of distance. But don't come *twice*, my man, and tell me I have given you a bad half-crown. No, no! I have paid once like a gentleman, and once is enough. For instance, during the Exhibition time I was stopped by an old country-woman in black, with a huge

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umbrella, who, bursting into tears, said to me, "Master, be this the way to Harlow, in Essex?" "This the way to Harlow? This is the way to Exeter, my good lady, and you will arrive there if you walk about 170 miles in your present direction," I answered courteously, replying to the old creature. Then she fell a-sobbing as though her old heart would break. She had a daughter a-dying at Harlow. She had walked already "vifty dree mile" that day. Tears stopped the rest of her discourse, so artless, genuine, and abundant that—I own the truth—I gave her, in I believe genuine silver, a piece of the exact size of that coin which forms the subject of this essay. Well. About a month since, near to the very spot where I had met my old woman, I was accosted by a person in black, a person in a large draggled cap, a person with a huge umbrella, who was beginning, "I say, master, can you tell me if this be the way to Har——" but here she stopped. Her eyes goggled wildly. She started from me, as Macbeth turned from Macduff. She would not engage with me. It was my old friend of Harlow, in Essex. I daresay she has informed many other people of her daughter's illness, and her anxiety to be put upon the right way to Harlow. Not long since a very gentleman-like man, Major Delamere let us call him (I like the title of Major very much), requested to see me, named a dead gentleman who he said had been our mutual friend, and on the strength of this mutual acquaintance, begged me to cash his check for five pounds!

It is these things, my dear sir, which serve to make a man cynical. I do conscientiously believe that had I cashed the Major's cheque, there would have been a difficulty about payment on the part of the respected bankers on whom he drew. On your honour and conscience, do you think that old widow who was walking from Tunbridge Wells to Harlow had a daughter ill, and was an honest woman at all? The daughter couldn't always, you see, be being ill, and her mother on her way to her dear child through Hyde Park. In the same way some habitual sneerers may be inclined to hint that the cabman's story was an invention—or at any rate, choose to ride off (so to speak) on the doubt. No. My opinion, I own, is unfavourable as regards the widow from Tunbridge Wells, and Major Delamere; but, believing the cabman was honest, I am glad to think he was not injured by the reader's most humble servant.

What a queer, exciting life this rogue's march must be: this attempt of the bad half-crowns to get into circulation! Had my distinguished friend the Major knocked at many doors that morning, before operating on mine? The sport must be something akin to the pleasure of tiger or elephant hunting. What ingenuity the sportsman must have in tracing his prey—what daring and caution in coming upon him! What coolness in facing the angry animal (for, after all, a man on whom you draw a cheque *à bout portant* will be angry). What a delicious thrill of triumph, if you can bring him down! If I have money at the banker's and draw for a portion of it over the counter, that is mere prose—any dolt can do that. But, having no balance, say, I drive up in a cab, present a cheque at

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Coutts's, and, receiving the amount, drive off? What a glorious morning's sport that has been! How superior in excitement to the common transactions of every-day life! . . . . I must tell a story; it is against myself, I know, but it *will* out, and perhaps my mind will be the easier.

More than twenty years ago, in an island remarkable for its verdure, I met four or five times one of the most agreeable companions with whom I have passed a night. I heard that evil times had come upon this gentleman; and, overtaking him in a road near my own house one evening, I asked him to come home to dinner. In two days, he was at my door again. At breakfast-time was this second appearance. He was in a cab (of course he was in a cab, they always are, these unfortunate, these courageous men). To deny myself was absurd. My friend could see me over the parlour blinds, surrounded by my family, and cheerfully partaking the morning meal. Might he have a word with me? and can you imagine its purport? By the most provoking delay—his uncle the admiral not being able to come to town till Friday—would I cash him a cheque? I need not say it would be paid on Saturday without fail. I tell you that man went away with money in his pocket, and I regret to add that his gallant relative has not *come to town yet!*

Laying down the pen, and sinking back in my chair, here, perhaps, I fall into a five minutes' reverie, and think of one, two, three, half-a-dozen cases in which I have been content to accept that sham promissory coin in return for sterling money advanced. Not a reader, whatever his age, but could tell a like story. I vow and believe there are men of fifty, who will dine well to-day, who have not paid their school debts yet, and who have not taken up their long-protested promises to pay. Tom, Dick, Harry, my boys, I owe you no grudge, and rather relish that wince with which you will read these meek lines and say, "He means me." Poor Jack in Hades! Do you remember a certain pecuniary transaction, and a little sum of money you borrowed "until the meeting of Parliament?" Parliament met often in your lifetime: Parliament has met since: but I think I should scarce be more surprised if your ghost glided into the room now, and laid down the amount of our little account, than I should have been if you had paid me in your lifetime with the actual acceptances of the Bank of England. You asked to borrow, but you never intended to pay. I would as soon have believed that a promissory note of Sir John Falstaff (accepted by Messrs. Bardolph and Nym, and payable in Aldgate,) would be as sure to find payment, as that note of the departed—nay, lamented—Jack Thriftless.

He who borrows, meaning to pay, is quite a different person from the individual here described. Many—most, I hope—took Jack's promise for what it was worth—and quite well knew that when he said, "Lend me," he meant "Give me" twenty pounds. "Give me change for this half-crown," said Jack; I know it's a pewter piece, and you gave him the change in honest silver, and pocketed the counterfeit gravely.

What a queer consciousness that must be which accompanies such a

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man in his sleeping, in his waking, in his walk through life, by his fireside with his children round him! "For what we are going to receive," &c. —he says grace before his dinner. "My dears! Shall I help you to some mutton? I robbed the butcher of the meat. I don't intend to pay him. Johnson, my boy, a glass of champagne? Very good, isn't it? Not too sweet. Forty-six. I get it from So-and-so, whom I intend to cheat." As eagles go forth and bring home to their eaglets the lamb or the pavid kid, I say there are men who live and victual their nests by plunder. We all know highway robbers in white neckcloths, domestic bandits, marauders, passers of bad coin. What was yonder cheque which Major Delamere proposed I should cash but a piece of bad money? What was Jack Thriftless's promise to pay? Having got his booty, I fancy Jack or the Major returning home, and wife and children gathering round about him. Poor wife and children! They respect papa very likely. They don't know he is false coin. Maybe the wife has a dreadful inkling of the truth, and, sickening, tries to hide it from the daughters and sons. Maybe she is an accomplice: herself a brazen forgery. If Turpin and Jack Sheppard were married, very likely Mesdames Sheppard and Turpin did not know, at first, what their husbands' real profession was, and fancied, when the men left home in the morning, they only went away to follow some regular and honourable business. Then a suspicion of the truth may have come: then a dreadful revelation: and presently we have the guilty pair robbing together, or passing forged money each on his own account. You know Doctor Dodd? I wonder whether his wife knows that he is a forger, and scoundrel? Has she had any of the plunder, think you, and were the darling children's new dresses bought with it? The Doctor's sermon last Sunday was certainly charming, and we all cried. Ah, my poor Dodd! Whilst he is preaching most beautifully, pocket-handkerchief in hand, he is peering over the pulpit cushions, looking out piteously for Messrs. Peachum and Lockit from the police-office. By Doctor Dodd you understand I would typify the rogue of respectable exterior, not committed to gaol yet, but not undiscovered. We all know one or two such. This very sermon perhaps will be read by some, or more likely—for, depend upon it, your solemn hypocritic scoundrels don't care much for light literature—more likely, I say, this discourse will be read by some of their wives, who think, "Ah mercy! does that horrible cynical wretch know how my poor husband blacked my eye, or abstracted mamma's silver teapot, or forced me to write So-and-so's name on that piece of stamped paper, or what not?" My good creature, I am not angry with *you*. If your husband has broken your nose, you will vow that he had authority over your person, and a right to demolish any part of it: if he has conveyed away your mamma's teapot, you will say that she gave it to him at your marriage, and it was very ugly, and what not: if he takes your aunt's watch, and you love him, you will carry it ere long to the pawnbroker's, and perjure yourself—oh, how you will perjure yourself—in the witness-box! I know this is a degrading view of woman's noble nature, her exalted

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mission, and so forth, and so forth. I know you will say this is bad morality. Is it? Do you, or do you not, expect your womankind to stick by you for better or for worse? Say I have committed a forgery, and the officers come in search of me, is my wife, Mrs. Dodd, to show them into the dining-room, and say, "Pray step in gentlemen! My husband has just come home from church. That bill with my Lord Chesterfield's acceptance, I am bound to own, was never written by his lordship, and the signature is in the doctor's handwriting?" I say, would any man of sense or honour, or fine feeling, praise his wife for telling the truth under such circumstances? Suppose she made a fine grimace, and said, "Most painful as my position is, most deeply as I feel for my William, yet truth must prevail, and I deeply lament to state that the beloved partner of my life *did* commit the flagitious act with which he is charged, and is at this present moment located in the two-pair back, up the chimney, whither it is my duty to lead you." Why, even Dodd himself, who was one of the greatest humbugs who ever lived, would not have had the face to say that he approved of his wife telling the truth in such a case. Would you have had Flora Macdonald beckon the officers, saying, "This way, gentlemen! You will find the young chevalier asleep in that cavern." Or don't you prefer her to be *splendide mendax*, and ready at all risks to save him? If ever I lead a rebellion, and my women betray me, may I be hanged but I will not forgive them: and if ever I steal a teapot, and *my* women don't stand up for me, pass the articles under their shawls, whisk down the street with it, outbluster the policeman, and utter any amount of fibs before Mr. Beak; those beings are not what I take them to be, and—for a fortune—I won't give them so much as a bad half-crown.

Is conscious guilt a source of unmixed pain to the bosom which harbours it? Has not your criminal, on the contrary, an excitement, an enjoyment within quite unknown to you and me who never did anything wrong in our lives? The housebreaker must snatch a fearful joy as he walks unchallenged by the policeman with his sack full of spoons and tankards. Do not cracksmen, when assembled together, entertain themselves with stories of glorious old burglaries which they or bygone heroes have committed? But that my age is mature and my habits formed, I should really just like to try a little criminality. Fancy passing a forged bill to your banker; calling on a friend and sweeping his sideboard of plate, his hall of umbrellas and coats; and then going home to dress for dinner, say —and to meet a bishop, a judge, and a police magistrate or so, and talk more morally than any man at table! How I should chuckle (as my host's spoons clinked softly in my pocket) whilst I was uttering some noble speech about virtue, duty, charity! I wonder do we meet garotters in society? In an average tea-party, now, how many returned convicts are there? Does John Footman, when he asks permission to go and spend the evening with some friends, pass his time in thuggee; waylay and strangle an old gentleman or two; let himself into your house, with

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the house-key of course, and appear as usual with the shaving-water when you ring your bell in the morning? The very possibility of such a suspicion invests John with a new and romantic interest in my mind. Behind the grave politeness of his countenance I try and read the lurking treason. Full of this pleasing subject, I have been talking thief-stories with a neighbour. The neighbour tells me how some friends of her's used to keep a jewel-box under a bed in their room; and, going into the room, they thought they heard a noise under the bed. They had the courage to look. The cook was under the bed—under the bed with the jewel-box. Of course she said she had come for purposes connected with her business; but this was absurd. A cook under a bed is not there for professional purposes. A relation of mine had a box containing diamonds under her bed, which diamonds she told me were to be mine. Mine! One day, at dinner-time, between the entrées and the roast, a cab drove away from my relative's house containing the box wherein lay the diamonds. John laid the dessert, brought the coffee, waited all the evening—and oh, how frightened he was when he came to learn that his mistress's box had been conveyed out of her own room, and it contained diamonds—"Law bless us, did it now?" I wonder whether John's subsequent career has been prosperous? Perhaps the gentlemen from Bow Street were all in the wrong when they agreed in suspecting John as the author of the robbery. His noble nature was hurt at the suspicion. You conceive he would not like to remain in a family where they were mean enough to suspect him of stealing a jewel-box out of a bed-room—and the injured man and my relatives soon parted. But, inclining (with my usual cynicism) to think that he did steal the valuables, think of his life for the month or two whilst he still remains in the service! He shows the officers over the house, agrees with them that the *coup* must have been made by persons familiar with it; gives them every assistance; pities his master and mistress with a manly compassion; points out what a cruel misfortune it is to himself as an honest man, with his living to get and his family to provide for, that this suspicion should fall on him. Finally, he takes leave of his place, with a deep though natural melancholy that ever he had accepted it. What's a thousand pounds to gentlefolks? A loss certainly, but they will live as well without the diamonds as with them. But to John his Hhhonour was worth more than diamonds, his Hhonour was. Whohever is to give him back his character? Who is to prevent hany one from saying, "Ho yes. This is the butler which was in the family where the diamonds was stole?" &c.

I wonder has John prospered in life subsequently? If he is innocent, he does not interest me in the least. The interest of the case lies in John's behaviour supposing him to be guilty. Imagine the smiling face, the daily service, the orderly performance of duty, whilst within John is suffering pangs lest discovery should overtake him. Every bell of the door which he is obliged to open may bring a police officer. The accomplices may peach. What an exciting life John's must have been

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for a while. And now, years and years after, when pursuit has long ceased, and detection is impossible, does he ever revert to the little transaction? Is it possible those diamonds cost a thousand pounds? What a rogue the fence must have been who only gave him so and so! And I pleasingly picture to myself an old ex-butler and an ancient receiver of stolen goods meeting and talking over this matter, which dates from times so early that the Queen's fair image could only just have begun to be coined or forged.

I choose to take John at the time when his little peccadillo is suspected, perhaps, but when there is no specific charge of robbery against him. He is not yet convicted: he is not even on his trial; how then can we venture to say he is guilty? Now think what scores of men and women walk the world in a like predicament; and what false coin passes current! Pinchbeck strives to pass off his history as sound coin. He knows it is only base metal, washed over with a thin varnish of learning. Poluphloisbos puts his sermons in circulation: sounding brass, lackered over with white metal, and marked with the stamp and image of piety. What say you to Drawcansir's reputation as a military commander? to Tibbs's pretensions to be a fine gentleman? to Sapphira's claims as a poetess, or Rodoessa's as a beauty? His bravery, his piety, high birth, genius, beauty—each of these deceivers would palm his falsehood on us, and have us accept his forgeries as sterling coin. And we talk here, please to observe, of weaknesses rather than crimes. Some of us have more serious things to hide than a yellow cheek behind a raddle of rouge, or a white poll under a wig of jetty curls. You know, neighbour, there are not only false teeth in this world, but false tongues: and some make up a bust and an appearance of strength with padding, cotton, and what not; while another kind of artist tries to take you in by wearing under his waistcoat, and perpetually thumping, an immense sham heart. Dear sir, may yours and mine be found, at the right time, of the proper size and in the right place.

And what has this to do with half-crowns, good or bad? Ah, friend! may our coin, battered, and clipped, and defaced though it be, be proved to be Sterling Silver on the day of the Great Assay!

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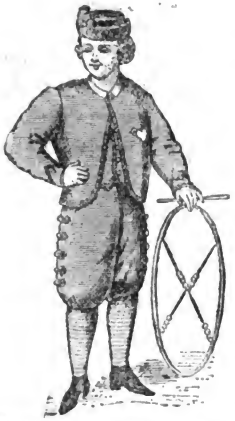
A Chapter on Boys.



We all recollect what Master Caxton's Papa said—when Mrs. Primins ejaculated, "Sir, sir, its a boy!"

"A boy," said he, "what is a boy?"

Well, well, Lady Caroline, can you solve the problem?

Let us pause and think deeply. What is a boy? if we refer to Dr. Johnson, he merely disposes of the question by saying, "a male child." Walker, adds, "not a girl," "one in a state of adolescence," "older than an infant," "a word of contempt for young men."

Oh! Johnson, oh! Walker, what limited ideas had ye of that happy class of Beings, yclept "Boys." A class do we say?

A kingdom, *a* Race of Beings, for know ye not with all your wisdom, that this earth of ours contains by far more boys than men—and that had they only the power, they would prove to you, that a boy, is not another word for contempt.

Ye were once boys yourselves, Master Walker, Master Johnson—little witty, clearheaded, lively boys, and could you but now only analyze the feelings that swelled your bosoms—the thoughts that swept through your brains—as each new idea unfolded itself to your imaginations, then would ye wish yourselves boys again, and acknowledge that Wordsworth did not err when he said "the boy is father of the man."

Look at this vast creation.

By whom will it be peopled?—our boys; by whom governed?—our boys; by whom possessed?—our boys.

Only think of that, dear Mamma—think that your dear little Augustus who now trembles as he walks, will one day make nations tremble by his voice.

No, no, Boys must not be treated with contempt, they are the young lords of the creation, and must be treated like young lords,—not like puppies with gold collars round their necks, nor like dolls dressed up for shew, but like what they are, *like Boys*.

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Now most young mothers seem to forget this important fact, they have been used to play with dolls, and when their son and heir is put into their hands, they think of their dolls—they dress them like dolls, and educate them like dolls, and that is the reason why we so often see the eldest son the greatest fool.

How many a bright Boy has been converted to a dull man, and why, —because his dear doting mother will not allow her dear Gussey to play with the other boys, they *are so rude, so boisterous, so ungentlemanly.*

How absurd! Do you recollect, my lady, how a favorite author describes his hero, "who was never known to commit an ungentlemanly act and never did a manly one."

That's all very well, but you wouldn't surely have me dress my own darling boy who is to be lord Fitzsomebody, like "any other man's" son—wouldn't I, my lady, that's just what I would do—dress him as expensively as you like, as neatly as you like, but do not let him fall into that early error that his sole claim to superiority of being is the style of his clothes.

We have all observed as we have sauntered down Regent Street, in a shop window, a poor old pony, who was once upon a time alive and kicking, and seated on his back a beautiful boy, who never was alive or kicking. Well, this shop itself is a sign that Boys at last, are beginning to be ranked as a separate class of humanity. It is called the "Boys' Clothing House," and devoted entirely to clothing Boys.

Thus, *at last* then Boys are considered worthy of having a House of their own—and it does seem curious to us that until A. B. Joseph & Co. (the inventors of the knickerbocker suit), opened this house (150, Regent Street), there was not such an accommodation to be found in London, nay in the whole of England, a House where, to use Joseph's own words, where Boys could be fitted with clothing *adapted to their size and age*—nor is it generally known how much depends on the boy's future health and strength by this system being carried out. For what can be more injurious to a boy of five years old, than being clad in garments adapted to a child of ten—or what more absurd than dressing a boy of ten like a young man of eighteen, and yet how often do we see it done—not only is a boy thus dressed injured in his youth, but often injured in his companionship with his schoolmates, and the once active lively boy becomes a solitary secluded man.

To be continued.

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Nail Scissors, Penknife,
Button Hook, Tweezers,
Stiletto,
Large Looking Glass,
Do. Tablet Soap Dish Plated,
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THE

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SEPTEMBER, 1863.

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"LET ME BEG YOU TO THINK OVER THE MATTER AGAIN"

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13.

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THE

CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

SEPTEMBER, 1863.

The Small House at Allington.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

An Old Man's Complaint.

HAVE you been thinking again of what I was saying to you, Bell?" Bernard said to his cousin one morning.

"Thinking of it, Bernard? Why should I think more of it? I had hoped that you had forgotten it yourself."

"No," he said; "I am not so easy-hearted as that. I cannot look on such a thing as I would the purchase of a horse, which I could give up without sorrow if I found that the animal was too costly for my purse. I did not tell you that I loved you till I was sure of myself, and having made myself sure I cannot change at all."

"And yet you would have me change."

"Yes, of course I would. If your heart be free now, it must of

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course be changed before you come to love any man. Such change as that is to be looked for. But when you have loved, then it will not be easy to change you."

"But I have not."

"Then I have a right to hope. I have been hanging on here, Bell, longer than I ought to have done, because I could not bring myself to leave you without speaking of this again. I did not wish to seem to you to be importunate——"

"If you could only believe me in what I say."

"It is not that I do not believe. I am not a puppy or a fool, to flatter myself that you must be in love with me. I believe you well enough. But still it is possible that your mind may alter."

"It is impossible."

"I do not know whether my uncle or your mother have spoken to you about this."

"Such speaking would have no effect."

In fact, her mother had spoken to her, but she truly said that such speaking would have no effect. If her cousin could not win the battle by his own skill, he might have been quite sure, looking at her character as it was known to him, that he would not be able to win it by the skill of others.

"We have all been made very unhappy," he went on to say, "by this calamity which has fallen on poor Lily."

"And because she has been deceived by the man she did love, I am to make matters square by marrying a man I——," and then she paused. "Dear Bernard, you should not drive me to say words which will sound harsh to you."

"No words can be harsher than those which you have already spoken. But, Bell, at any rate, you may listen to me."

Then he told her how desirable it was with reference to all the concerns of the Dale family that she should endeavour to look favourably on his proposition. It would be good for them all, he said, especially for Lily, as to whom, at the present moment, their uncle felt so kindly. He, as Bernard pleaded, was so anxious at heart for this marriage, that he would do anything that was asked of him if he were gratified. But if he were not gratified in this, he would feel that he had ground for displeasure.

Bell, as she had been desired to listen, did listen very patiently. But when her cousin had finished, her answer was very short. "Nothing that my uncle can say, or think, or do, can make any difference in this," said she.

"You will think nothing, then, of the happiness of others."

"I would not marry a man I did not love, to ensure any amount of happiness to others;—at least I know I ought not to do so. But I do not believe I should ensure any one's happiness by this marriage. Certainly not yours."

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After this Bernard had acknowledged to himself that the difficulties in his way were great. "I will go away till next autumn," he said to his uncle.

"If you would give up your profession and remain here, she would not be so perverse."

"I cannot do that, sir. I cannot risk the well-being of my life on such a chance." Then his uncle had been angry with him, as well as with his niece. In his anger he determined that he would go again to his sister-in-law, and, after some unreasonable fashion, he resolved that it would become him to be very angry with her also, if she declined to assist him with all her influence as a mother.

"Why should they not both marry?" he said to himself. Lord De Guest's offer as to young Eames had been very generous. As he had then declared, he had not been able to express his own opinion at once; but on thinking over what the earl had said, he had found himself very willing to heal the family wound in the manner proposed, if any such healing might be possible. That, however, could not be done quite as yet. When the time should come, and he thought it might come soon,—perhaps in the spring when the days should be fine and the evenings again long,—he would be willing to take his share with the earl in establishing that new household. To Crosbie he had refused to give anything, and there was upon his conscience a shade of remorse in that he had so refused. But if Lily could be brought to love this other man, he would be more open-handed. She should have her share as though she was in fact his daughter. But then, if he intended to do so much for them at the Small House, should not they in return do something also for him? So thinking, he went again to his sister-in-law, determined to explain his views, even though it might be at the risk of some hard words between them. As regarded himself, he did not much care for hard words spoken to him. He almost expected that people's words should be hard and painful. He did not look for the comfort of affectionate soft greetings, and perhaps would not have appreciated them had they come to him. He caught Mrs. Dale walking in the garden, and brought her into his own room, feeling that he had a better chance there than in her own house. She, with an old dislike to being lectured in that room, had endeavoured to avoid the interview, but had failed.

"So I met John Eames at the manor," he had said to her in the garden.

"Ah, yes; and how did he get on there? I cannot conceive poor Johnny keeping holiday with the earl and his sister. How did he behave to them, and how did they behave to him?"

"I can assure you he was very much at home there."

"Was he, indeed? Well, I hope it will do him good. He is, I'm sure, a very good young man; only rather awkward."

"I didn't think him awkward at all. You'll find, Mary, that he'll do very well;—a great deal better than his father did."

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"I'm sure I hope he may." After that Mrs. Dale made her attempt to escape; but the squire had taken her prisoner, and led her captive into the house. "Mary," he said, as soon as he had induced her to sit down, "it is time that this should be settled between my nephew and niece."

"I am afraid there will be nothing to settle."

"What do you mean;—that you disapprove of it?"

"By no means,—personally. I should approve of it very strongly. But that has nothing to do with the question."

"Yes, it has. I beg your pardon, but it must have, and should have a great deal to do with it. Of course, I am not saying that anybody should now ever be compelled to marry anybody."

"I hope not."

"I never said that they ought, and never thought so. But I do think that the wishes of all her family should have very great weight with a girl that has been well brought up."

"I don't know whether Bell has been well brought up; but in such a matter as this nobody's wishes would weigh a feather with her; and, indeed, I could not take upon myself even to express a wish. To you I can say that I should have been very happy if she could have regarded her cousin as you wish her to do."

"You mean that you are afraid to tell her so?"

"I am afraid to do what I think is wrong, if you mean that."

"I don't think it would be wrong, and therefore I shall speak to her myself."

"You must do as you like about that, Mr. Dale; I can't prevent you. I shall think you wrong to harass her on such a matter, and I fear also that her answer will not be satisfactory to you. If you choose to tell her your opinion, you must do so. Of course I shall think you wrong, that's all."

Mrs. Dale's voice as she said this was stern enough, and so was her countenance. She could not forbid the uncle to speak his mind to his niece, but she specially disliked the idea of any interference with her daughter. The squire got up and walked about the room, trying to compose himself that he might answer her rationally, but without anger.

"May I go now?" said Mrs. Dale.

"May you go? Of course you may go if you like it. If you think that I am intruding upon you in speaking to you of the welfare of your two girls, whom I endeavour to regard as my own daughters,—except in this, that I know they have never been taught to love me,—if you think that it is an interference on my part to show anxiety for their welfare, of course you may go."

"I did not mean to say anything to hurt you, Mr. Dale."

"Hurt me! What does it signify whether I am hurt or not? I have no children of my own, and of course my only business in life is to

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provide for my nephews and nieces. I am an old fool if I expect that they are to love me in return, and if I venture to express a wish I am interfering and doing wrong! It is hard,—very hard. I know well that they have been brought up to dislike me, and yet I am endeavouring to do my duty by them."

"Mr. Dale, that accusation has not been deserved. They have not been brought up to dislike you. I believe that they have both loved and respected you as their uncle; but such love and respect will not give you a right to dispose of their hands."

"Who wants to dispose of their hands?"

"There are some things in which I think no uncle,—no parent,—should interfere, and of all such things this is the chief. If after that you may choose to tell her your wishes, of course you can do so."

"It will not be much good after you have set her against me."

"Mr. Dale, you have no right to say such things to me, and you are very unjust in doing so. If you think that I have set my girls against you, it will be much better that we should leave Allington altogether. I have been placed in circumstances which have made it difficult for me to do my duty to my children; but I have endeavoured to do it, not regarding my own personal wishes. I am quite sure, however, that it would be wrong in me to keep them here, if I am to be told by you that I have taught them to regard you unfavourably. Indeed, I cannot suffer such a thing to be said to me."

All this Mrs. Dale said with an air of decision, and with a voice expressing a sense of injury received, which made the squire feel that she was very much in earnest.

"Is it not true," he said, defending himself, "that in all that relates to the girls you have ever regarded me with suspicion?"

"No, it is not true." And then she corrected herself, feeling that there was something of truth in the squire's last assertion. "Certainly not with suspicion," she said. "But as this matter has gone so far, I will explain what my real feelings have been. In worldly matters you can do much for my girls, and have done much."

"And wish to do more," said the squire.

"I am sure you do. But I cannot on that account give up my place as their only living parent. They are my children, and not yours. And even could I bring myself to allow you to act as their guardian and natural protector, they would not consent to such an arrangement. You cannot call that suspicion."

"I can call it jealousy."

"And should not a mother be jealous of her children's love?"

During all this time the squire was walking up and down the room with his hands in his trousers pockets. And when Mrs. Dale had last spoken, he continued his walk for some time in silence.

"Perhaps it is well that you should have spoken out," he said.

"The manner in which you accused me made it necessary."

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"I did not intend to accuse you, and I do not do so now; but I think that you have been, and that you are, very hard to me,—very hard indeed. I have endeavoured to make your children, and yourself also, sharers with me in such prosperity as has been mine. I have striven to add to your comfort and to their happiness. I am most anxious to secure their future welfare. You would have been very wrong had you declined to accept this on their behalf; but I think that in return for it you need not have begrudged me the affection and obedience which generally follows from such good offices."

"Mr. Dale, I have begrudged you nothing of this."

"I am hurt;—I am hurt," he continued. And she was surprised by his look of pain even more than by the unaccustomed warmth of his words. "What you have said has, I have known, been the case all along. But though I had felt it to be so, I own that I am hurt by your open words."

"Because I have said that my own children must ever be my own?"

"Ah, you have said more than that. You and the girls have been living here, close to me, for—how many years is it now?—and during all those years there has grown up for me no kindly feeling. Do you think that I cannot hear, and see, and feel? Do you suppose that I am a fool and do not know? As for yourself you would never enter this house if you did not feel yourself constrained to do so for the sake of appearances. I suppose it is all as it should be. Having no children of my own, I owe the duty of a parent to my nieces; but I have no right to expect from them in return either love, regard, or obedience. I know I am keeping you here against your will, Mary. I won't do so any longer." And he made a sign to her that she was to depart.

As she rose from her seat her heart was softened towards him. In these latter days he had shown much kindness to the girls,—a kindness that was more akin to the gentleness of love than had ever come from him before. Lily's fate had seemed to melt even his sternness, and he had striven to be tender in his words and ways. And now he spoke as though he had loved the girls, and had loved them in vain. Doubtless he had been a disagreeable neighbour to his sister-in-law, making her feel that it was never for her personally that he had opened his hand. Doubtless he had been moved by an unconscious desire to undermine and take upon himself her authority with her own children. Doubtless he had looked askance at her from the first day of her marriage with his brother. She had been keenly alive to all this since she had first known him, and more keenly alive to it than ever since the failure of those efforts she had made to live with him on terms of affection, made during the first year or two of her residence at the Small House. But, nevertheless, in spite of all, her heart bled for him now. She had gained her victory over him, having fully held her own position with her children; but now that he complained that he had been beaten in the struggle, her heart bled for him.

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"My brother," she said, and as she spoke she offered him her hands, "it may be that we have not thought as kindly of each other as we should have done."

"I have endeavoured," said the old man. "I have endeavoured——" And then he stopped, either hindered by some excess of emotion, or unable to find the words which were necessary for the expression of his meaning.

"Let us endeavour once again,—both of us."

"What, begin again at near seventy! No, Mary, there is no more beginning again for me. All this shall make no difference to the girls. As long as I am here they shall have the house. If they marry, I will do for them what I can. I believe Bernard is much in earnest in his suit, and if Bell will listen to him, she shall still be welcomed here as mistress of Allington. What you have said shall make no difference; —but as to beginning again, it is simply impossible."

After that Mrs. Dale walked home through the garden by herself. He had studiously told her that that house in which they lived should be lent, not to her, but to her children, during his lifetime. He had positively declined the offer of her warmer regard. He had made her understand that they were to look on each other almost as enemies; but that she, enemy as she was, should still be allowed the use of his munificence, because he chose to do his duty by his nieces!

"It will be better for us that we shall leave it," she said to herself as she seated herself in her own arm-chair over the drawing-room fire.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Doctor Crofts is Called in.

Mrs. Dale had not sat long in her drawing-room before tidings were brought to her which for a while drew her mind away from that question of her removal. "Mamma," said Bell, entering the room, "I really do believe that Jane has got scarlatina." Jane, the parlour-maid, had been ailing for the last two days, but nothing serious had hitherto been suspected.

Mrs. Dale instantly jumped up. "Who is with her?" she asked.

It appeared from Bell's answer that both she and Lily had been with the girl, and that Lily was still in the room. Whereupon Mrs. Dale ran upstairs, and there was on the sudden a commotion in the house. In an hour or so the village doctor was there, and he expressed an opinion that the girl's ailment was certainly scarlatina. Mrs. Dale, not satisfied with this, sent off a boy to Guestwick for Dr. Crofts, having herself maintained an opposition of many years' standing against the medical reputation of the apothecary, and gave a positive order to the two girls not

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to visit poor Jane again. She herself had had scarlatina, and might do as she pleased. Then, too, a nurse was hired.

All this changed for a few hours the current of Mrs. Dale's thoughts: but in the evening she went back to the subject of her morning conversation, and before the three ladies went to bed, they held together an open council of war upon the subject. Dr. Crofts had been found to be away from Guestwick, and word had been sent on his behalf that he would be over at Allington early on the following morning. Mrs. Dale had almost made up her mind that the malady of her favourite maid was not scarlatina, but had not on that account relaxed her order as to the absence of her daughters from the maid's bedside.

"Let us go at once," said Bell, who was even more opposed to any domination on the part of her uncle than was her mother. In the discussion which had been taking place between them the whole matter of Bernard's courtship had come upon the carpet. Bell had kept her cousin's offer to herself as long as she had been able to do so; but since her uncle had pressed the subject upon Mrs. Dale, it was impossible for Bell to remain silent any longer. "You do not want me to marry him, mamma; do you?" she had said, when her mother had spoken with some show of kindness towards Bernard. In answer to this, Mrs. Dale had protested vehemently that she had no such wish, and Lily, who still held to her belief in Dr. Crofts, was almost equally animated. To them all, the idea that their uncle should in any way interfere in their own views of life, on the strength of the pecuniary assistance which they had received from him, was peculiarly distasteful. But it was especially distasteful that he should presume to have even an opinion as to their disposition in marriage. They declared to each other that their uncle could have no right to object to any marriage which either of them might contemplate as long as their mother should approve of it. The poor old squire had been right in saying that he was regarded with suspicion. He was so regarded. The fault had certainly been his own, in having endeavoured to win the daughters without thinking it worth his while to win the mother. The girls had unconsciously felt that the attempt was made, and had vigorously rebelled against it. It had not been their fault that they had been brought to live in their uncle's house, and made to ride on his ponies and to eat partially of his bread. They had so eaten, and so lived, and declared themselves to be grateful. The squire was good in his way, and they recognized his goodness; but not on that account would they transfer to him one jot of the allegiance which as children they owed to their mother. When she told them her tale, explaining to them the words which their uncle had spoken that morning, they expressed their regret that he should be so grieved; but they were strong in assurances to their mother that she had been sinned against, and was not sinning.

"Let us go at once," said Bell.

"It is much easier said than done, my dear."

"Of course it is, mamma; else we shouldn't be here now. What I

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mean is this,—let us take some necessary first step at once. It is clear that my uncle thinks that our remaining here should give him some right over us. I do not say that he is wrong to think so. Perhaps it is natural. Perhaps, in accepting his kindness, we ought to submit ourselves to him. If that be so, it is a conclusive reason for our going."

"Could we not pay him rent for the house," said Lily, "as Mrs. Hearn does? You would like to remain here, mamma, if you could do that?"

"But we could not do that, Lily. We must choose for ourselves a smaller house than this, and one that is not burdened with the expense of a garden. Even if we paid but a moderate rent for this place, we should not have the means of living here."

"Not if we lived on toast and tea?" said Lily, laughing.

"But I should hardly wish you to live upon toast and tea; and indeed I fancy that I should get tired of such a diet myself."

"Never, mamma," said Lily. "As for me, I confess to a longing after mutton chops; but I don't think you would ever want such vulgar things."

"At any rate, it would be impossible to remain here," said Bell. "Uncle Christopher would not take rent from mamma; and even if he did, we should not know how to go on with our other arrangements after such a change. No; we must give up the dear old Small House."

"It is a dear old house," said Lily, thinking, as she spoke, more of those late scenes in the garden, when Crosbie had been with them in the autumn months, than of any of the former joys of her childhood.

"After all, I do not know that I should be right to move," said Mrs. Dale, doubtingly.

"Yes, yes," said both the girls at once. "Of course you will be right, mamma; there cannot be a doubt about it, mamma. If we can get any cottage, or even lodgings, that would be better than remaining here, now that we know what uncle Christopher thinks of it."

"It will make him very unhappy," said Mrs. Dale.

But even this argument did not in the least move the girls. They were very sorry that their uncle should be unhappy. They would endeavour to show him by some increased show of affection that their feelings towards him were not unkind. Should he speak to them they would endeavour to explain to him that their thoughts towards him were altogether affectionate. But they could not remain at Allington increasing their load of gratitude, seeing that he expected a certain payment which they did not feel themselves able to render.

"We should be robbing him, if we stayed here," Bell declared;—"wilfully robbing him of what he believes to be his just share of the bargain."

So it was settled among them that notice should be given to their uncle of their intention to quit the Small House of Allington.

And then came the question as to their new home. Mrs. Dale was aware that her income was at any rate better than that possessed by

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Mrs. Eames, and therefore she had fair ground for presuming that she could afford to keep a house at Guestwick. "If we do go away, that is what we must do," she said.

"And we shall have to walk out with Mary Eames, instead of Susan Boyce," said Lily. "It won't make so much difference after all."

"In that respect we shall gain as much as we lose," said Bell.

"And then it will be so nice to have the shops," said Lily, ironically.

"Only we shall never have any money to buy anything," said Bell.

"But we shall see more of the world," said Lily. "Lady Julia's carriage comes into town twice a week, and the Miss Gruffens drive about in great style. Upon the whole, we shall gain a great deal; only for the poor old garden. Mamma, I do think I shall break my heart at parting with Hopkins; and as to him, I shall be disappointed in mankind if he ever holds his head up again after I am gone."

But in truth there was very much of sadness in their resolution, and to Mrs. Dale it seemed as though she were managing matters badly for her daughters, and allowing poverty and misfortune to come upon them through her own fault. She well knew how great a load of sorrow was lying on Lily's heart, hidden beneath those little attempts at pleasantry which she made. When she spoke of being disappointed in mankind, Mrs. Dale could hardly repress an outward shudder that would betray her thoughts. And now she was consenting to take them forth from their comfortable home, from the luxury of their lawns and gardens, and to bring them to some small dingy corner of a provincial town,—because she had failed to make herself happy with her brother-in-law. Could she be right to give up all the advantages which they enjoyed at Allington,—advantages which had come to them from so legitimate a source,—because her own feelings had been wounded? In all their future want of comfort, in the comfortless dowdiness of the new home to which she would remove them, would she not always blame herself for having brought them to that by her own false pride? And yet it seemed to her that she now had no alternative. She could not now teach her daughters to obey their uncle's wishes in all things. She could not make Bell understand that it would be well that she should marry Bernard because the squire had set his heart on such a marriage. She had gone so far that she could not now go back.

"I suppose we must move at Lady-day?" said Bell, who was in favour of instant action. "If so, had you not better let uncle Christopher know at once?"

"I don't think that we can find a house by that time."

"We can get in somewhere," continued Bell. "There are plenty of lodgings in Guestwick, you know." But the sound of the word lodgings was uncomfortable in Mrs. Dale's ears.

"If we are to go, let us go at once," said Lily. "We need not stand much upon the order of our going."

"Your uncle will be very much shocked," said Mrs. Dale.

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"He cannot say that it is your fault," said Bell.

It was thus agreed between them that the necessary information should be at once given to the squire, and that the old, well-loved house should be left for ever. It would be a great fall in a worldly point of view,—from the Allington Small House to an abode in some little street of Guestwick. At Allington they had been county people,—raised to a level with their own squire and other squires by the circumstance of their residence; but at Guestwick they would be small even among the people of the town. They would be on an equality with the Eameses, and much looked down upon by the Gruffens. They would hardly dare to call any more at Guestwick Manor, seeing that they certainly could not expect Lady Julia to call upon them at Guestwick. Mrs. Boyce no doubt would patronize them, and they could already anticipate the condolence which would be offered to them by Mrs. Hearn. Indeed such a movement on their part would be tantamount to a confession of failure in the full hearing of so much of the world as was known to them.

I must not allow my readers to suppose that these considerations were a matter of indifference to any of the ladies at the Small House. To some women of strong mind, of highly-strung philosophic tendencies, such considerations might have been indifferent. But Mrs. Dale was not of this nature, nor were her daughters. The good things of the world were good in their eyes, and they valued the privilege of a pleasant social footing among their friends. They were by no means capable of a wise contempt of the advantages which chance had hitherto given to them. They could not go forth rejoicing in the comparative poverty of their altered condition. But then, neither could they purchase those luxuries which they were about to abandon at the price which was asked for them.

"Had you not better write to my uncle?" said one of the girls. But to this Mrs. Dale objected that she could not make a letter on such a subject clearly intelligible, and that therefore she would see the squire on the following morning. "It will be very dreadful," she said, "but it will soon be over. It is not what he will say at the moment that I fear so much as the bitter reproaches of his face when I shall meet him afterwards." So, on the following morning, she again made her way, and now without invitation, to the squire's study.

"Mr. Dale," she began, starting upon her work with some confusion in her manner, and hurry in her speech, "I have been thinking over what we were saying together yesterday, and I have come to a resolution which I know I ought to make known to you without a moment's delay."

The squire also had thought of what had passed between them, and had suffered much as he had done so; but he had thought of it without acerbity or anger. His thoughts were ever gentler than his words, and his heart softer than any exponent of his heart that he was able to put forth. He wished to love his brother's children, and to be loved by them;

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but even failing that, he wished to do good to them. It had not occurred to him to be angry with Mrs. Dale after that interview was over. The conversation had not gone pleasantly with him; but then he hardly expected that things would go pleasantly. No idea had occurred to him that evil could come upon any of the Dale ladies from the words which had then been spoken. He regarded the Small House as their abode and home as surely as the Great House was his own. In giving him his due, it must be declared that any allusion to their holding these as a benefit done to them by him had been very far from his thoughts. Mrs. Hearn, who held her cottage at half its real value, grumbled almost daily at him as her landlord; but it never occurred to him that therefore he should raise her rent, or that in not doing so he was acting with special munificence. It had ever been to him a grumbling, cross-grained, unpleasant world; and he did not expect from Mrs. Hearn, or from his sister-in-law, anything better than that to which he had ever been used.

"It will make me very happy," said he, "if it has any bearing on Bell's marriage with her cousin."

"Mr. Dale, that is out of the question. I would not vex you by saying so if I were not certain of it; but I know my child so well!"

"Then we must leave it to time, Mary."

"Yes, of course; but no time will suffice to make Bell change her mind. We will, however, leave the subject. And now, Mr. Dale, I have to tell you of something else;—we have resolved to leave the Small House."

"Resolved on what?" said the squire, turning his eyes full upon her.

"We have resolved to leave the Small House."

"Leave the Small House!" he said, repeating her words; "and where on earth do you mean to go?"

"We think we shall go into Guestwick."

"And why?"

"Ah, that is so hard to explain. If you would only accept the fact as I tell it to you, and not ask for the reasons which have guided me!"

"But that is out of the question, Mary. In such a matter as that I must ask your reasons; and I must tell you also that, in my opinion, you will not be doing your duty to your daughters in carrying out such an intention, unless your reasons are very strong indeed."

"But they are very strong," said Mrs. Dale; and then she paused.

"I cannot understand it," said the squire. "I cannot bring myself to believe that you are really in earnest. Are you not comfortable there?"

"More comfortable than we have any right to be with our means."

"But I thought you always did very nicely with your money. You never get into debt."

"No; I never get into debt. It is not that, exactly. The fact is,

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Mr. Dale, we have no right to live there without paying rent; but we could not afford to live there if we did pay rent."

"Who has talked about rent?" he said, jumping up from his chair. "Some one has been speaking falsehoods of me behind my back." No gleam of the real truth had yet come to him. No idea had reached his mind that his relatives thought it necessary to leave his house in consequence of any word that he himself had spoken. He had never considered himself to have been in any special way generous to them, and would not have thought it reasonable that they should abandon the house in which they had been living, even if his anger against them had been strong and hot. "Mary," he said, "I must insist upon getting to the bottom of this. As for your leaving the house, it is out of the question. Where can you be better off, or so well? As to going into Guestwick, what sort of life would there be for the girls? I put all that aside as out of the question; but I must know what has induced you to make such a proposition. Tell me honestly,—has any one spoken evil of me behind my back?"

Mrs. Dale had been prepared for opposition and for reproach; but there was a decision about the squire's words, and an air of masterdom in his manner, which made her recognize more fully than she had yet done the difficulty of her position. She almost began to fear that she would lack power to carry out her purpose.

"Indeed, it is not so, Mr. Dale."

"Then what is it?"

"I know that if I attempt to tell you, you will be vexed, and will contradict me."

"Vexed I shall be, probably."

"And yet I cannot help it. Indeed, I am endeavouring to do what is right by you and by the children."

"Never mind me; your duty is to think of them."

"Of course it is; and in doing this they most cordially agree with me."

In using such argument as that, Mrs. Dale showed her weakness, and the squire was not slow to take advantage of it. "Your duty is to them," he said; "but I do not mean by that that your duty is to let them act in any way that may best please them for the moment. I can understand that they should be run away with by some romantic nonsense, but I cannot understand it of you."

"The truth is this, Mr. Dale. You think that my children owe to you that sort of obedience which is due to a parent, and as long as they remain here, accepting from your hands so large a part of their daily support, it is perhaps natural that you should think so. In this unhappy affair about Bell——"

"I have never said anything of the kind," said the squire, interrupting her.

"No; you have not said so. And I do not wish you to think that I

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make any complaint. But I feel that it is so, and they feel it. And, therefore, we have made up our minds to go away."

Mrs. Dale, as she finished, was aware that she had not told her story well, but she had acknowledged to herself that it was quite out of her power to tell it as it should be told. Her main object was to make her brother-in-law understand that she certainly would leave his house, and to make him understand this with as little pain to himself as possible. She did not in the least mind his thinking her foolish, if only she could so carry her point as to be able to tell her daughters on her return that the matter was settled. But the squire, from his words and manners, seemed indisposed to give her this privilege.

"Of all the propositions which I ever heard," said he, "it is the most unreasonable. It amounts to this, that you are too proud to live rent-free in a house which belongs to your husband's brother, and therefore you intend to subject yourself and your children to the great discomfort of a very straitened income. If you yourself only were concerned I should have no right to say anything; but I think myself bound to tell you that, as regards the girls, everybody that knows you will think you to have been very wrong. It is in the natural course of things that they should live in that house. The place has never been let. As far as I know, no rent has ever been paid for the house since it was built. It has always been given to some member of the family, who has been considered as having the best right to it. I have considered your footing there as firm as my own here. A quarrel between me and your children would be to me a great calamity, though, perhaps, they might be indifferent to it. But if there were such a quarrel it would afford no reason for their leaving that house. Let me beg you to think over the matter again."

The squire could assume an air of authority on certain occasions, and he had done so now. Mrs. Dale found that she could only answer him by a simple repetition of her own intention; and, indeed, failed in making him any serviceable answer whatsoever.

"I know that you are very good to my girls," she said.

"I will say nothing about that," he answered; not thinking at that moment of the Small House, but of the full possession which he had desired to give to the elder of all the privileges which should belong to the mistress of Allington,—thinking also of the means by which he was hoping to repair poor Lily's shattered fortunes. What words were further said had no great significance, and Mrs. Dale got herself away, feeling that she had failed. As soon as she was gone the squire arose, and putting on his great-coat, went forth with his hat and stick to the front of the house. He went out in order that his thoughts might be more free, and that he might indulge in that solace which an injured man finds in contemplating his injury. He declared to himself that he was very hardly used,—so hardly used, that he almost began to doubt himself and his own motives. Why was it that the people around him disliked him so strongly,—avoided him and thwarted him in the efforts which he made

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for their welfare? He offered to his nephew all the privileges of a son,—much more indeed than the privileges of a son,—merely asking in return that he would consent to live permanently in the house which was to be his own. But his nephew refused. "He cannot bear to live with me," said the old man to himself sorely. He was prepared to treat his nieces with more generosity than the daughters of the House of Allington had usually received from their fathers; and they repelled his kindness, running away from him, and telling him openly that they would not be beholden to him. He walked slowly up and down the terrace, thinking of this very bitterly. He did not find in the contemplation of his grievance all that solace which a grievance usually gives, because he accused himself in his thoughts rather than others. He declared to himself that he was made to be hated, and protested to himself that it would be well that he should die and be buried out of memory, so that the remaining Dales might have a better chance of living happily; and then as he thus discussed all this within his own bosom, his thoughts were very tender, and though he was aggrieved, he was most affectionate to those who had most injured him. But it was absolutely beyond his power to reproduce outwardly, with words and outward signs, such thoughts and feelings.

It was now very nearly the end of the year, but the weather was still soft and open. The air was damp rather than cold, and the lawns and fields still retained the green tints of new vegetation. As the squire was walking on the terrace Hopkins came up to him, and touching his hat, remarked that they should have frost in a day or two.

"I suppose we shall," said the squire.

"We must have the mason to the flues of that little grape-house, sir, before I can do any good with a fire there."

"Which grape-house?" said the squire, crossly.

"Why, the grape-house in the other garden, sir. It ought to have been done last year by rights." This Hopkins said to punish his master for being cross to him. On that matter of the flues of Mrs. Dale's grape-house he had, with much consideration, spared his master during the last winter, and he felt that this ought to be remembered now. "I can't put any fire in it, not to do any real good, till something's done. That's sure."

"Then don't put any fire in it," said the squire.

Now the grapes in question were supposed to be peculiarly fine, and were the glory of the garden of the Small House. They were always forced, though not forced so early as those at the Great House, and Hopkins was in a state of great confusion.

"They'll never ripen, sir; not the whole year through."

"Then let them be unripe," said the squire, walking about.

Hopkins did not at all understand it. The squire in his natural course was very unwilling to neglect any such matter as this, but would be specially unwilling to neglect anything touching the Small House. So Hopkins stood on the terrace, raising his hat and scratching his head. "There's something wrong amongst them," said he to himself, sorrowfully.

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But when the squire had walked to the end of the terrace and had turned upon the path which led round the side of the house, he stopped and called to Hopkins.

"Have what is needful done to the flue," he said.

"Yes, sir; very well, sir. It'll only be re-setting the bricks. Nothing more ain't needful, just this winter."

"Have the place put in perfect order while you're about it," said the squire, and then he walked away.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Doctor Crofts is Turned out.

"Have you heard the news, my dear, from the Small House?" said Mrs. Boyce to her husband, some two or three days after Mrs. Dale's visit to the squire. It was one o'clock, and the parish pastor had come in from his ministrations to dine with his wife and children.

"What news?" said Mr. Boyce, for he had heard none.

"Mrs. Dale and the girls are going to leave the Small House; they're going into Guestwick to live."

"Mrs. Dale going away; nonsense!" said the vicar. "What on earth should take her into Guestwick? She doesn't pay a shilling of rent where she is."

"I can assure you it's true, my dear. I was with Mrs. Hearn just now, and she had it direct from Mrs. Dale's own lips. Mrs. Hearn said she'd never been taken so much aback in her whole life. There's been some quarrel, you may be sure of that."

Mr. Boyce sat silent, pulling off his dirty shoes preparatory to his dinner. Tidings so important, as touching the social life of his parish, had not come to him for many a day, and he could hardly bring himself to credit them at so short a notice.

"Mrs. Hearn says that Mrs. Dale spoke ever so firmly about it, as though determined that nothing should change her."

"And did she say why?"

"Well, not exactly. But Mrs. Hearn said she could understand there had been words between her and the squire. It couldn't be anything else, you know. Probably it had something to do with that man Crosbie."

"They'll be very pushed about money," said Mr. Boyce, thrusting his feet into his slippers.

"That's just what I said to Mrs. Hearn. And those girls have never been used to anything like real economy. What's to become of them I don't know;" and Mrs. Boyce, as she expressed her sympathy for her dear friends, received considerable comfort from the prospect of their future poverty. It always is so, and Mrs. Boyce was not worse than her neighbours.

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"You'll find they'll make it up before the time comes," said Mr. Boyce, to whom the excitement of such a change in affairs was almost too good to be true.

"I am afraid not," said Mrs. Boyce; "I'm afraid not. They are both so determined. I always thought that riding and giving the girls hats and habits was injurious. It was treating them as though they were the squire's daughters, and they were not the squire's daughters."

"It was almost the same thing."

"But now we see the difference," said the judicious Mrs. Boyce. "I often said that dear Mrs. Dale was wrong, and it turns out that I was right. It will make no difference to me, as regards calling on them and that sort of thing."

"Of course it won't."

"Not but what there must be a difference, and a very great difference too. It will be a terrible come down for poor Lily, with the loss of her fine husband and all."

After dinner, when Mr. Boyce had again gone forth upon his labours, the same subject was discussed between Mrs. Boyce and her daughters, and the mother was very careful to teach her children that Mrs. Dale would be just as good a person as ever she had been, and quite as much a lady, even though she should live in a very dingy house at Guestwick; from which lesson the Boyce girls learned plainly that Mrs. Dale, with Bell and Lily, were about to have a fall in the world, and that they were to be treated accordingly.

From all this it will be discovered that Mrs. Dale had not given way to the squire's arguments, although she had found herself unable to answer them. As she had returned home she had felt herself to be almost vanquished, and had spoken to the girls with the air and tone of a woman who hardly knew in which course lay the line of her duty. But they had not seen the squire's manner on the occasion, nor heard his words, and they could not understand that their own purpose should be abandoned because he did not like it. So they talked their mother into fresh resolves, and on the following morning she wrote a note to her brother-in-law, assuring him that she had thought much of all that he had said, but again declaring that she regarded herself as bound in duty to leave the Small House. To this he had returned no answer, and she had communicated her intention to Mrs. Hearn, thinking it better that there should be no secret in the matter.

"I am sorry to hear that your sister-in-law is going to leave us," Mr. Boyce said to the squire that same afternoon.

"Who told you that?" asked the squire, showing by his tone that he by no means liked the topic of conversation which the parson had chosen.

"Well, I had it from Mrs. Boyce, and I think Mrs. Hearn told her."

"I wish Mrs. Hearn would mind her own business, and not spread idle reports."

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The squire said nothing more, and Mr. Boyce felt that he had been very unjustly snubbed.

Dr. Crofts had come over and pronounced as a fact that it was scarlatina. Village apothecaries are generally wronged by the doubts which are thrown upon them, for the town doctors when they come always confirm what the village apothecaries have said.

"There can be no doubt as to its being scarlatina," the doctor declared; "but the symptoms are all favourable."

There was, however, much worse coming than this. Two days afterwards Lily found herself to be rather unwell. She endeavoured to keep it to herself, fearing that she should be brought under the doctor's notice as a patient; but her efforts were unavailing, and on the following morning it was known that she had also taken the disease. Dr. Crofts declared that everything was in her favour. The weather was cold. The presence of the malady in the house had caused them all to be careful, and, moreover, good advice was at hand at once. The doctor begged Mrs. Dale not to be uneasy, but he was very eager in begging that the two sisters might not be allowed to be together. "Could you not send Bell into Guestwick,—to Mrs. Eames'?" said he. But Bell did not choose to be sent to Mrs. Eames', and was with great difficulty kept out of her mother's bedroom, to which Lily as an invalid was transferred.

"If you will allow me to say so," he said to Bell, on the second day after Lily's complaint had declared itself, "you are wrong to stay here in the house."

"I certainly shall not leave mamma, when she has got so much upon her hands," said Bell.

"But if you should be taken ill she would have more on her hands," pleaded the doctor.

"I could not do it," Bell replied. "If I were taken over to Guestwick, I should be so uneasy that I should walk back to Allington the first moment that I could escape from the house."

"I think your mother would be more comfortable without you."

"And I think she would be more comfortable with me. I don't ever like to hear of a woman running away from illness; but when a sister or a daughter does so, it is intolerable." So Bell remained, without permission indeed to see her sister, but performing various outside administrations which were much needed.

And thus all manner of trouble came upon the inhabitants of the Small House, falling upon them as it were in a heap together. It was as yet barely two months since those terrible tidings had come respecting Crosbie; tidings which, it was felt at the time, would of themselves be sufficient to crush them; and now to that misfortune other misfortunes had been added,—one quick upon the heels of another. In the teeth of the doctor's kind prophecy Lily became very ill, and after a few days was delirious. She would talk to her mother about Crosbie, speaking of him as she used to speak in the autumn that was passed. But even in her

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madness she remembered that they had resolved to leave their present home; and she asked the doctor twice whether their lodgings in Guestwick were ready for them.

It was thus that Crofts first heard of their intention. Now, in these days of Lily's worst illness, he came daily over to Allington, remaining there, on one occasion, the whole night. For all this he would take no fee;—nor had he ever taken a fee from Mrs. Dale. "I wish you would not come so often," Bell said to him one evening, as he stood with her at the drawing-room fire, after he had left the patient's room; "you are overloading us with obligations." On that day Lily was over the worst of the fever, and he had been able to tell Mrs. Dale that he did not think that she was now in danger.

"It will not be necessary much longer," he said; "the worst of it is over."

"It is such a luxury to hear you say so. I suppose we shall owe her life to you; but nevertheless——"

"Oh, no; scarlatina is not such a terrible thing now as it used to be."

"Then why should you have devoted your time to her as you have done? It frightens me when I think of the injury we must have done you."

"My horse has felt it more than I have," said the doctor, laughing. "My patients at Guestwick are not so very numerous." Then, instead of going, he sat himself down. "And it is really true," he said, "that you are all going to leave this house?"

"Quite true. We shall do so at the end of March, if Lily is well enough to be moved."

"Lily will be well long before that, I hope; not, indeed, that she ought to be moved out of her own rooms for many weeks to come yet."

"Unless we are stopped by her we shall certainly go at the end of March." Bell now had also sat down, and they both remained for some time looking at the fire in silence.

"And why is it, Bell?" he said, at last. "But I don't know whether I have a right to ask."

"You have a right to ask any question about us," she said. "My uncle is very kind. He is more than kind; he is generous. But he seems to think that our living here gives him a right to interfere with mamma. We don't like that, and, therefore, we are going"

The doctor still sat on one side of the fire, and Bell still sat opposite to him; but the conversation did not form itself very freely between them. "It is bad news," he said, at last.

"At any rate, when we are ill you will not have so far to come and see us."

"Yes, I understand. That means that I am ungracious not to congratulate myself on having you all so much nearer to me; but I do not in the least. I cannot bear to think of you as living anywhere

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but here at Allington. Dales will be out of their place in a street at Guestwick."

"That's hard upon the Dales, too."

"It is hard upon them. It's a sort of offshoot from that very tyrannical law of noblesse oblige. I don't think you ought to go away from Allington, unless the circumstances are very imperative."

"But they are very imperative."

"In that case, indeed!" And then again he fell into silence.

"Have you never seen that mamma is not happy here?" she said, after another pause. "For myself, I never quite understood it all before as I do now; but now I see it."

"And I have seen it;—have seen at least what you mean. She has led a life of restraint; but then, how frequently is such restraint the necessity of a life? I hardly think that your mother would move on that account."

"No. It is on our account. But this restraint, as you call it, makes us unhappy, and she is governed by seeing that. My uncle is generous to her as regards money; but in other things,—in matters of feeling,—I think he has been ungenerous."

"Bell," said the doctor; and then he paused.

She looked up at him, but made no answer. He had always called her by her Christian name, and they two had ever regarded each other as close friends. At the present moment she had forgotten all else besides this, and yet she had infinite pleasure in sitting there and talking to him.

"I am going to ask you a question which perhaps I ought not to ask, only that I have known you so long that I almost feel that I am speaking to a sister."

"You may ask me what you please," said she.

"It is about your cousin Bernard."

"About Bernard!" said Bell.

It was now dusk; and as they were sitting without other light than that of the fire, she knew that he could not discern the colour which covered her face as her cousin's name was mentioned. But, had the light of day pervaded the whole room, I doubt whether Crofts would have seen that blush, for he kept his eyes firmly fixed upon the fire.

"Yes, about Bernard? I don't know whether I ought to ask you."

"I'm sure I can't say," said Bell, speaking words of the nature of which she was not conscious.

"There has been a rumour in Guestwick that he and you——"

"It is untrue," said Bell; "quite untrue. If you hear it repeated, you should contradict it. I wonder why people should say such things."

"It would have been an excellent marriage;—all your friends must have approved it."

"What do you mean, Dr. Crofts? How I do hate those words, 'an excellent marriage.' In them is contained more of wicked worldliness than

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any other words that one ever hears spoken. You want me to marry my cousin simply because I should have a great house to live in, and a coach. I know that you are my friend; but I hate such friendship as that."

"I think you misunderstand me, Bell. I mean that it would have been an excellent marriage, provided you had both loved each other."

"No, I don't misunderstand you. Of course it would be an excellent marriage, if we loved each other. You might say the same if I loved the butcher or the baker. What you mean is, that it makes a reason for loving him."

"I don't think I did mean that."

"Then you mean nothing."

After that, there were again some minutes of silence during which Dr. Crofts got up to go away. "You have scolded me very dreadfully," he said, with a slight smile, "and I believe I have deserved it for interfering——"

"No; not at all for interfering."

"But at any rate you must forgive me before I go."

"I won't forgive you at all, unless you repent of your sins, and alter altogether the wickedness of your mind. You will become very soon as bad as Dr. Gruffen."

"Shall I?"

"Oh, but I will forgive you; for after all, you are the most generous man in the world."

"Oh, yes; of course I am. Well,—good-by."

"But, Dr. Crofts, you should not suppose others to be so much more worldly than yourself. You do not care for money so very much——"

"But I do care very much."

"If you did, you would not come here for nothing day after day."

"I do care for money very much. I have sometimes nearly broken my heart because I could not get opportunities of earning it. It is the best friend that a man can have——"

"Oh, Dr. Crofts!"

"——the best friend that a man can have, if it be honestly come by. A woman can hardly realize the sorrow which may fall upon a man from the want of such a friend."

"Of course a man likes to earn a decent living by his profession; and you can do that."

"That depends upon one's ideas of decency."

"Ah! mine never ran very high. I've always had a sort of aptitude for living in a pigsty;—a clean pigsty, you know, with nice fresh bean straw to lie upon. I think it was a mistake when they made a lady of me. I do, indeed."

"I do not," said Dr. Crofts.

"That's because you don't quite know me yet. I've not the slightest pleasure in putting on three different dresses a day. I do it very often because it comes to me to do it, from the way in which we have been

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taught to live. But when we get to Guestwick I mean to change all that; and if you come in to tea, you'll see me in the same brown frock that I wear in the morning,—unless, indeed, the morning work makes the brown frock dirty. Oh, Dr. Crofts! you'll have it pitch-dark riding home under the Guestwick elms."

"I don't mind the dark," he said; and it seemed as though he hardly intended to go even yet.

"But I do," said Bell, "and I shall ring for candles." But he stopped her as she put her hand out to the bell-pull.

"Stop a moment, Bell. You need hardly have the candles before I go, and you need not begrudge my staying either, seeing that I shall be all alone at home."

"Begrudge your staying!"

"But, however, you shall begrudge it, or else make me very welcome." He still held her by the wrist, which he had caught as he prevented her from summoning the servant.

"What do you mean?" said she. "You know you are welcome to us as flowers in May. You always were welcome; but now, when you have come to us in our trouble—— At any rate, you shall never say that I turn you out."

"Shall I never say so?" And still he held her by the wrist. He had kept his chair throughout, but she was standing before him,—between him and the fire. But she, though he held her in this way, thought little of his words, or of his action. They had known each other with great intimacy, and though Lily would still laugh at her, saying that Dr. Crofts was her lover, she had long since taught herself that no such feeling as that would ever exist between them.

"Shall I never say so, Bell? What if so poor a man as I ask for the hand that you will not give to so rich a man as your cousin Bernard?"

She instantly withdrew her arm and moved back very quickly a step or two across the rug. She did it almost with the motion which she might have used had he insulted her; or had a man spoken such words who would not, under any circumstances, have a right to speak them.

"Ah, yes! I thought it would be so," he said. "I may go now, and may know that I have been turned out."

"What is it you mean, Dr. Crofts? What is it you are saying? Why do you talk that nonsense, trying to see if you can provoke me?"

"Yes; it is nonsense. I have no right to address you in that way, and certainly should not have done it now that I am in your house in the way of my profession. I beg your pardon." Now he also was standing, but he had not moved from his side of the fireplace. "Are you going to forgive me before I go?"

"Forgive you for what?" said she.

"For daring to love you; for having loved you almost as long as you can remember; for loving you better than all beside. This alone you should forgive; but will you forgive me for having told it?"

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He had made her no offer, nor did she expect that he was about to make one. She herself had hardly yet realized the meaning of his words, and she certainly had asked herself no question as to the answer which she should give to them. There are cases in which lovers present themselves in so unmistakeable a guise, that the first word of open love uttered by them tells their whole story, and tells it without the possibility of a surprise. And it is generally so when the lover has not been an old friend, when even his acquaintance has been of modern date. It had been so essentially in the case of Crosbie and Lily Dale. When Crosbie came to Lily and made his offer, he did it with perfect ease and thorough self-possession, for he almost knew that it was expected. And Lily, though she had been flurried for a moment, had her answer pat enough. She already loved the man with all her heart, delighted in his presence, basked in the sunshine of his manliness, rejoiced in his wit, and had tuned her ears to the tone of his voice. It had all been done and the world expected it. Had he not made his offer, Lily would have been ill-treated;—though, alas, alas, there was future ill-treatment, so much heavier, in store for her! But there are other cases in which a lover cannot make himself known as such without great difficulty, and when he does do so, cannot hope for an immediate answer in his favour. It is hard upon old friends that this difficulty should usually fall the heaviest upon them. Crofts had been so intimate with the Dale family that very many persons had thought it probable that he would marry one of the girls. Mrs. Dale herself had thought so, and had almost hoped it. Lily had certainly done both. These thoughts and hopes had somewhat faded away, but yet their former existence should have been in the doctor's favour. But now, when he had in some way spoken out, Bell started back from him and would not believe that he was in earnest. She probably loved him better than any man in the world, and yet, when he spoke to her of love, she could not bring herself to understand him.

"I don't know what you mean, Dr. Crofts; indeed I do not," she said.

"I had meant to ask you to be my wife; simply that. But you shall not have the pain of making me a positive refusal. As I rode here to-day I thought of it. During my frequent rides of late I have thought of little else. But I told myself that I had no right to do it. I have not even a house in which it would be fit that you should live."

"Dr. Crofts, if I loved you,—if I wished to marry you——" and then she stopped herself.

"But you do not?"

"No; I think not. I suppose not. No. But in any way no consideration about money has anything to do with it."

"But I am not that butcher or that baker whom you could love?"

"No," said Bell; and then she stopped herself from further speech, not as intending to convey all her answer in that one word, but as not knowing how to fashion any further words.

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"I knew it would be so," said the doctor.

It will, I fear, be thought by those who condescend to criticize this lover's conduct and his mode of carrying on his suit, that he was very unfit for such work. Ladies will say that he wanted courage, and men will say that he wanted wit. I am inclined, however, to believe that he behaved as well as men generally do behave on such occasions, and that he showed himself to be a good average lover. There is your bold lover, who knocks his lady-love over as he does a bird, and who would anathematize himself all over, and swear that his gun was distraught, and look about as though he thought the world was coming to an end, if he missed to knock over his bird. And there is your timid lover, who winks his eyes when he fires, who has felt certain from the moment in which he buttoned on his knickerbockers that he at any rate would kill nothing, and who, when he hears the loud congratulations of his friends, cannot believe that he really did bag that beautiful winged thing by his own prowess. The beautiful winged thing which the timid man carries home in his bosom, declining to have it thrown into a miscellaneous cart, so that it may never be lost in a common crowd of game, is better to him than are the slaughtered hecatombs to those who kill their birds by the hundred.

But Dr. Crofts had so winked his eye, that he was not in the least aware whether he had winged his bird or no. Indeed, having no one at hand to congratulate him, he was quite sure that the bird had flown away uninjured into the next field. "No" was the only word which Bell had given in answer to his last sidelong question, and No is not a comfortable word to lovers. But there had been that in Bell's No which might have taught him that the bird was not escaping without a wound, if he had still had any of his wits about him.

"Now I will go," said he. Then he paused for an answer, but none came. "And you will understand what I meant when I spoke of being turned out."

"Nobody—turns you out." And Bell, as she spoke, had almost descended to a sob.

"It is time, at any rate, that I should go; is it not? And, Bell, don't suppose that this little scene will keep me away from your sister's bedside. I shall be here to-morrow, and you will find that you will hardly know me again for the same person." Then in the dark he put out his hand to her.

"Good-by," she said, giving him her hand. He pressed hers very closely, but she, though she wished to do so, could not bring herself to return the pressure. Her hand remained passive in his, showing no sign of offence; but it was absolutely passive.

"Good-by, dearest friend," he said.

"Good-by," she answered,—and then he was gone.

She waited quite still till she heard the front-door close after him, and then she crept silently up to her own bedroom, and sat herself down in a

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low rocking-chair over the fire. It was in accordance with a custom already established that her mother should remain with Lily till the tea was ready downstairs; for in these days of illness such dinners as were provided were eaten early. Bell, therefore, knew that she had still some half hour of her own, during which she might sit and think undisturbed.

And what naturally should have been her first thoughts?—that she had ruthlessly refused a man who, as she now knew, loved her well, and for whom she had always felt at any rate the warmest friendship? Such were not her thoughts, nor were they in any way akin to this. They ran back instantly to years gone by,—over long years, as her few years were counted,—and settled themselves on certain halcyon days, in which she had dreamed that he had loved her, and had fancied that she had loved him. How she had schooled herself for those days since that, and taught herself to know that her thoughts had been over-bold! And now it had all come round. The only man that she had ever liked had loved her. Then there came to her a memory of a certain day, in which she had been almost proud to think that Crosbie had admired her, in which she had almost hoped that it might be so; and as she thought of this she blushed, and struck her foot twice upon the floor. "Dear Lily," she said to herself—"poor Lily!" But the feeling which induced her then to think of her sister had had no relation to that which had first brought Crosbie into her mind.

And this man had loved her through it all,—this priceless, peerless man,—this man who was as true to the backbone as that other man had shown himself to be false; who was as sound as the other man had proved himself to be rotten. A smile came across her face as she sat looking at the fire, thinking of this. A man had loved her, whose love was worth possessing. She hardly remembered whether or no she had refused him or accepted him. She hardly asked herself what she would do. As to all that it was necessary that she should have many thoughts, but the necessity did not press upon her quite immediately. For the present, at any rate, she might sit and triumph;—and thus triumphant she sat there till the old nurse came in and told her that her mother was waiting for her below.

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Anti-Respectability.

There are a number of commonplaces which are constantly attracting attention under slightly different forms. From time to time they strike the fancy of ingenious writers, who give them a new gloss by the help of some degree of literary talent. One of the most attractive and popular of these is what may be called the anti-respectability commonplace. In every generation—in fact, several times in a generation—it occurs to some lively person who combines power of expression with more than average sensibility, that a certain proportion of those who are condemned, and even stigmatized, by the world at large—who fall, so to speak, under its official censure—are in reality better than others who are rewarded with its smiles and its favours. The approval of mankind, its causes and its effects, are all summed up in the one word, 'Respectable.' To be respectable, whether the object of the feeling is a man or a woman, is to fall under the protection of public opinion—to come up to that most real, though very indefinite standard of goodness, the attainment of which is exacted of every one as a condition of being allowed to associate upon terms of ostensible equality with the rest of the human race. The anti-respectability commonplace or commonplaces are made up of denunciations of the triviality of this standard, and illustrations of the numerous cases in which it fails to secure even that small amount of average virtue which it may be supposed to be intended to secure.

Novels, for very good reasons, are, generally speaking, made the vehicles of denunciations of this kind ; and the publication of a popular novel is the commonest mode of bringing forward what is to be said on the subject. Such, at least, is the practice of our own day. Formerly, poetry answered the same purpose. Though at present it is hardly ever so employed, at least in this country, it is the common theme of all satirists from Horace to Pope. Whether Byron sneered or declaimed —whether *Childe Harold* or *Don Juan* was in hand—almost all his utterances might be summed up as protests against respectability. This style of writing has, perhaps, been carried farther in France than in any other country. It is the common topic of all the most popular French writers, and especially of Balzac and Victor Hugo, that the monster, Society, is the most oppressive of tyrants, imposing the most absurd tests by the most unreasonable means, on persons who are dwarfed in intellect and character by the discipline to which they are subjected, even if they are not driven into the very vices against which it is professedly directed. The popularity of these writers was such that at one time they no doubt

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exercised a great influence over the character, and even over the politics and history, of France. In our own country the same tune has been frequently played to audiences far less disposed to listen, and in every respect of a much less malleable constitution. Its characteristic merits and defects have been recently displayed in a very attractive way by Mrs. Norton. In her tale, *Lost and Saved*, that distinguished authoress has shot one more little arrow at poor old Society, who has in her time been made into a sort of Aunt Sally, eternally battered more or less skilfully by the missiles of a crowd of writers whose exertions are watched by the public at large with keen interest, and are rewarded, if they are in the least degree successful, by an applause which can hardly be said to be strictly proportioned to their merits.

The story itself is probably well known to most of our readers, and for the purpose of extracting and observing upon its moral, which alone, and not the literary merits of the book, is the object of the present article, it may be stated very shortly. Beatrice Brook—all youth, beauty, innocence, and virtue—loves, and is loved, by one Montague Treherne, who is heir—subject to the provisions of an oppressive and absurd will—to a title and an immense estate. Her father, a retired lieutenant in the navy, gets ruined by some unfortunate speculations, and at the height of his misfortunes his daughter, by the infernal arts of a certain Mrs. Grey, who is in league with Treherne, is inveigled into taking a journey on the Continent, under Mrs. Grey's care. At Venice she finds the existing incumbent of the title to which Treherne is the heir; and this formidable old man, armed by the tyrannical will with all manner of authority over Treherne's marriage, utterly forbids him to have anything to do with Beatrice. Treherne thereupon prevails upon Beatrice to elope with him to Trieste, where he expects to get married at all hazards, and the wicked Mrs. Grey helps him therein. Unluckily they get into a wrong steamer, and go to Alexandria, and thence to the middle of the desert, where, between travelling and emotion, Beatrice falls ill, and is likely to die. For the sake of her reputation she is extremely anxious to be married, and no clergyman being available, a passing doctor is dressed up to look like one, and performs the service. Hereupon Beatrice recovers, and, thinking herself Treherne's wife, lives with him as such. They then get back to England, and the whole story being kept very quiet, and especially the marriage, which would have endangered all Treherne's splendid prospects, Beatrice returns to her father, who supposes that she has been spending her time with Mrs. Grey. As, however, it becomes clear that she is going to have a child, she presses Treherne to acknowledge the marriage, and at last, going to his lodging for that purpose, is actually confined there. Her father does not know where she is, and Treherne keeps her as well as he can in the front parlour, promising that when he reaches the period fixed by the will for his majority, he will acknowledge her as his wife. There she and her child live for about a year in a most uncomfortable way, and by degrees she makes the dis-

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covery that there is very little sympathy between her lover and herself, and, in short, that she has made a great mistake. During this period a certain Lady Nesdale is put and is kept prominently before the reader. She is the wife of Lord Nesdale, and a niece of the wicked Mrs. Grey, and is the mistress of several men, of whom, at the period of the story, Treherne is the most favoured, and also the most prominent. Lady Nesdale is honoured and respected, while Beatrice pines away in her front parlour, neglected and wretched. Beatrice at last finds out the relations between her lover and Lady Nesdale. There are a variety of scenes of love and rage. Treherne tells Beatrice that the supposed marriage is all nonsense, and that if it were valid she could not prove it, and at last deserts her and her child, and leaves her in her front parlour without even money to pay her rent. As she happened, when she left her father's lodging to go over to Treherne's, to have in her pocket 170*l.* worth of old Brussels lace, which she had a special gift of mending, she contrives to support her child and herself by mending lace, and to keep the 170*l.* in reserve. After a good deal of trouble she is discovered by one Maurice Llewellyn, who, having been rejected by her sister, had immediately taken up with her intimate friend, and who happens also to be a friend of the doctor who celebrated the sham marriage. She is thus restored to her family, who receive her with open arms. Her father, however, dies of paralysis, and her child of epilepsy, and she goes abroad with her sister, and is kindly received by the father and mother of her sister's ex-lover, Maurice Llewellyn. At Genoa she falls in with an Italian count, who is an interesting widower, his wife having deserted him before her death. Treherne, who had married again, being about this time poisoned by Mrs. Grey, Beatrice considers herself as a widow, and marries the count. The public, we are informed, were pretty gracious to her, but were in the habit (surely not an altogether unnatural one) of asking whether in her youth there had not been some odd story about her having a child, and about an elopement?

Such is the story. It was put before the world with a certain stern, uncompromising air. The authoress showed in the preface, in the occasional observations interwoven with the story itself, and in a subsequent letter to the morning papers, that she took a high moral view of what she had done. She obviously regarded the tale by no means as a mere pastime—a tale like another intended to be a mere elegant toy, destined to go the way of all such toys, and to be forgotten as soon as it had accomplished its purpose of amusing a few idle hours. On the contrary, it was to give the world a lesson, to make it reflect, to lash and expose wickedness in high places, and show the Lady Nesdales and other such sinners of this wicked world that there was one eye upon them which they could not hope to evade, the eye of a three-volume Providence, turned on as required by the monster circulating libraries which in these days provide so large a part of the world with both sentiments and opinions. Such being the pretensions of the book, let us see what it proves, and especially

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what it proves against the wicked world and the corrupt practices which it was apparently intended to expose and reform.

It proves first of all, or at least it appears to be meant to prove, that whereas Beatrice Brook was very good and perfectly innocent, she underwent great and needless sufferings, cruelly inflicted on her by hypocritical Society. If Mrs. Norton did not mean to say this at least, it is impossible to make out that she did mean anything specific. Is this, then, true? In the first place, was Beatrice Brook very good? No doubt she was attractive. A very pretty girl, accomplished, ladylike, natural, and full of life and animal spirits, is as pleasant an object as is to be found in this poor old world; and whatever the faults of the world may be, want of readiness to recognize that fact is most assuredly not one of them. It is, however, one thing to be charming, and quite another to be good; and though it might be, and no doubt was, not only natural but hardly avoidable to fall in love with Beatrice Brook, there was nothing much to praise in her, taking her at Mrs. Norton's own estimate. No girl of good feeling would have left her father and sister all alone and in great distress, in a wretched lodging in London, to go pleasuring about in France and Italy, with people whom she hardly knew. No woman who had any proper feeling of self-respect and decency would have eloped with her lover in the middle of the night, at half an hour's warning, putting herself entirely in his power, in a foreign country, when she might have received the protection of one of her own sex, and when, at all events, by simply staying where she was, she might easily have obtained some proper guardianship. Surely no one will contend that it is a mere conventional prejudice, not founded on any solid reason, which forbids a girl of eighteen or nineteen to travel about with a young man of twenty-four. To say that there is no great harm in such a step if the girl is in love with the man, is in effect to say that a pretty girl can do no wrong, and is under no moral obligations. The test of goodness, the very meaning of it, is to do right when it is unpleasant to do so; everybody can do right when it is pleasant. If Beatrice Brook had picked a pocket, her beauty would have been no excuse. Why was it an excuse for running away with her lover? She clearly did wrong; and not only wrong, but very wrong indeed, and richly deserved to be severely punished. Then, was the punishment unreasonably severe? The answer is, that whatever it was, it was self-inflicted. Society had nothing to do with it. She suffered great agony by concealing what had happened from her father. But why did she not take him into her confidence? Simply because she did not choose. Would society have blamed her if she had? So far from it, any sensible person whose advice she might have asked would instantly have said, "Tell your father, whatever you do; and lose no time about it. He is your natural protector; and Treherne has no right whatever to compel you to sacrifice your character to his prospects. If you have been foolish enough to promise him secrecy, the facts of the case not only excuse but require a breach of the promise to that extent. It is bare justice to your-

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self, to your father, and to your child, that you should have proper advice on the subject; and the promise made by you to your lover was clearly made under undue influence, and without reference to the present state of affairs." If this had been done, half the suffering which Beatrice had in fact to undergo, and a large part of the far more grievous suffering which her father and sister had to undergo, would have been avoided, and the rules of society—the ordinary current morality by which the great mass of mankind regulate their conduct—would have been complied with. By keeping her own counsel, Beatrice punished herself; and it is not only absurd, but absolutely impudent, to blame the rules of society for a result which would have been avoided by observing them.

What happens next? Beatrice's child is born under circumstances which are almost grotesquely improbable. After its birth, she lives with its father for more than a year without saying a single word about her marriage, and during this time she has no respectable female friends. She feels herself, in fact, out of the pale of society, and judiciously enough keeps herself to herself. Is society to blame for this? Ought it to lay down the rule, that whenever a young woman lives with a young man who is the father of her child, and to whom she is not known to be married, it is to be presumed that she is privately married to him, and has good reasons for concealing the fact? If not, it is difficult to see what else would have happened to Beatrice Brook than that which is said to have happened. As far as the world knew, she was living with a man who was not her husband, and the world refused, or, rather, if they had known of her existence, would have refused, to call upon her. Was the world so very wrong? So far respectability seems to have the best of it. At last, her sham marriage is proved to have taken place, and, her child being dead, she meets with friends with whom she lives quietly and respectably, though she avoids the world at large; and people who know little about the matter, to some extent avoid her, thereby wounding her pride. What is to be said of this? It would appear on the whole that she was rather leniently treated. Her friends were kind to her, and forgave her for a very serious fault, or, indeed, for more than one. The general public—the half-dozen people who knew her slightly—knew no more than this, that she had eloped with a man with whom she went through the thinnest possible kind of marriage ceremony, lived with him for more than a year, and then allowed him, without any attempt on her own part or the part of her friends to establish the validity of the first marriage, to treat it as a mere nullity, by deserting her and marrying somebody else. This being all that was or could be known upon the subject by the world at large, was the world at large wrong in shaking its head, saying that the story was a very queer and unpleasant one, and declining, upon the whole, to be intimate with the lady to whom it related—at least, until she had established a new position, and for a considerable time behaved herself well elsewhere? Candid observers will probably be of opinion that this was about the least that

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either could or ought to be expected, and that Miss Brook was treated not only justly, but as leniently as any one could be treated.

It may, however, be said, that Lady Nesdale, who was a thoroughly bad woman and deserved all that society could possibly inflict on her, was treated with every possible mark of respect, whilst Beatrice was excommunicated, and that the injustice lies not in the punishment of the one, but in the contrast afforded to it by the impunity of the other. The answer to this is given in a very few words: Lady Nesdale was not found out, and took good care not to be. She contrived to deceive even her husband, and, of course, persons who had no particular interest in her, and no call to be always watching her proceedings, would be more easily deceived. Her impunity no more proves that society is indifferent to morality than the impunity of a large number of pickpockets proves that there are no laws against theft. Indeed, in one of the scenes of *Lost and Saved*, Mrs. Norton observes that Lady Nesdale was horrified at the discovery of her secret by Beatrice, because she knew that if she was found out she would be expelled from all the distinctions and amusements which she valued so much, and reduced to the position of a social outlaw. What more could society do? To say that it does not in every case fully execute its own rules is only to say that it is not omniscient.

Cases no doubt occur in every one's experience in which women misconduct themselves, and are known to do so, but in which, owing to the absence of any positive scandal, society does not interfere. This may look like hypocrisy. In some cases it is so, but in general it is a question of evidence. It is of the essence of social penalties that every one should be entitled to the benefit of a doubt, and that nothing short of some notorious fact, the import of which cannot be questioned, should be taken as evidence of the sort of guilt which calls for social excommunication. If it were not so, the world would be at the mercy of malignant gossip, and some of the pleasantest and most useful relations of life would be prohibited. In social as well as legal relations it is always well to require a high standard of proof before you punish. *Pœna in paucos, metus in omnes*, is the true theory; for the real security for good conduct is to be found, not in terror, but in conscience. The manifest, avowed crime is punished for the sake of branding the offence, far more than for the sake of removing a particular offender. The number of fortunate females, who are the objects of suspicion only, will always be considerable; nor shall we ever get rid of what has been well called the undetected class.

This observation shows how far the rules of the world, as to respectability, have a moral foundation. They are not intended to make the world good, still less can they be defended on the ground that it is a moral duty to avoid the society of wrong-doers—a duty which, if it existed, would certainly put each of us in his or her own peculiar corner, and keep us there all the days of our lives. Their real justification is that they tend to prevent certain evils, which always will exist, from rising to a height which would make it impossible for human beings to

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associate together at all. People who blame the rules of society, and ascribe to them injustice and hypocrisy, are in reality paying to society an extravagant compliment. Their complaints ascribe to it functions to which it has no sort of claim. They suppose it ought to make people good. In fact, it is only a sort of parish beadle, and such writers as Mrs. Norton are angry because it is but a deputy Providence. They are just like the French peasant who blames the Government if he has a bad harvest. Society at large cannot be more moral than its individual members, and, of course, it seeks not to reform the world, but to make its wheels run smoothly.

The only other charge against the world which Mrs. Norton's story suggests is that Treherne was not so severely punished as Beatrice for their common fault, he being, in a moral point of view, far the greater offender of the two. This is not put forward, by any means, so prominently as the other complaints with which it is mixed up; and, indeed, it is not alleged that the public at large had any means of knowledge on the subject. The facts stated are, first, that an ambitious and worldly-minded woman, who did know of the story, saw in it no objection to a marriage between Treherne and her daughter—a marriage by which her daughter would be raised to a position splendid both in rank and fortune; and, secondly, that an honest and upright man, who was intimately acquainted with all the facts, looked upon Treherne ever after as a very contemptible blackguard, and dropped his acquaintance, though they had married sisters. The inference from this appears to be that society, as at present constituted, lays down no specific rules as to the consequences which are to be annexed to immorality in the case of a man, but leaves individuals to judge upon the subject according to their estimate of the moral heinousness of the particular circumstances of every individual case, though, with regard to a woman, it is more severe, punishing mere want of chastity with excommunication, whatever special circumstances of mitigation may be attached to any particular instance of it. There can be little doubt that such, as a matter of fact, is the tacit rule on which society at large generally acts in these cases. It certainly looks at first sight more like a case of injustice than the other instances alleged by Mrs. Norton; but when the matter is considered it soon becomes apparent that the rule rests, at all events, on broad foundations, and that the mere exhibition of a particular instance in which a great moral offender is visited by a lighter punishment than one who is much less wicked than himself, really proves nothing at all.

Any one who has reflected at all on punishments must have been struck with the observation that wherever they are inflicted the relation between moral guilt and the severity of suffering is very slight, and that it often appears not to exist at all. This is equally true of the laws of a nation, the rules of society, the management of a school, nay, the management of the lower animals. It is not the worst kind of dog that gets whipped oftenest or hardest, nor is it the worst boy at a public school that

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is most severely flogged. An Eton boy goes to a public-house on a hot afternoon and drinks more ale than is good for him. There is or was a law against going to any public-house whatever, and the breach of this law involved (very properly) a sound flogging. It is easy to imagine other acts which would show a thousand times more moral depravity which it would obviously be unwise to punish at all. For instance, a boy who is strong and an excellent swimmer sees another drowning, and, instead of jumping into the water to help him, runs to get assistance, and there is reason to suppose that he would not have been sorry if his companion had been drowned before it came. Morally this would approach to the guilt of murder, yet it is very probable that a sensible schoolmaster would not think it right to punish it. He would leave the offender to his own conscience and the contempt of his schoolfellows. The object of punishment, he would say, is to preserve the discipline of the school, not to make the boys good and courageous. This, indeed, is the true theory of punishment, in whatever sphere it is exercised, legal or social. It acts exclusively by terror, unless, indeed, by some accident the person on whom it is inflicted happens to be of such a disposition and is placed in such circumstances that the mere suffering as such does him good, as an illness or an accident might. These, however, are exceptional cases, nor are the exceptions frequent. In all ordinary instances the primary effects of punishment are exclusively deterrent; hence the propriety of establishing a rule by which it is inflicted turns upon the question whether, if such a rule were established, there would be any reasonable probability that it would effect its purpose.

The social rule in question is, that whenever a woman is manifestly proved to be guilty of particular faults, she is to be socially excommunicated, no excuse being allowed for her conduct; but that this is not to be the case with men, whose offences in that particular are left to be dealt with by individuals according to their individual estimate of the particular circumstances of the case. The suggestion made by such books as *Lost and Saved* is that the same rule ought to be applied to both sexes. Let that proposal be examined by the test suggested above. As to that branch of the rule which applies to women, it is clear in the first place that women—in the present state of society—are so much more dependent on the opinion of the world than men, and are so much more delicately framed than men in body, mind, and spirit, that there is a far better prospect of producing the desired result in their case than in the case of men. If a woman is put out of the social synagogue, what can she do? She has nothing to give to the world which the world cannot get elsewhere; she is dependent on others for all that makes life not only agreeable, but even tolerable, and being by nature infinitely more susceptible than men to the pleasures and pains produced by the praise or blame of others, she is much more likely to be affected by the prospect of losing the one and incurring the other. Hence there is a reasonable prospect of producing the effect desired by erecting the sentiment in question into a posi-

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tive rule with inexorable penalties. Nor is this matter of mere speculation. There is no doubt, as a matter of fact, that the existence of the rule in question produces immense results, and that wherever it is vigorously and impartially administered, it produces a very high average level of female virtue, and thereby invests life in general with what is unquestionably the best and greatest of its charms. It may fairly be asked why such a rule should be so stringently enforced and admit of so few exceptions? Why should not the world at large inquire into special circumstances, and admit them in extenuation of punishment, as reasonable people would in their own private relations? The answer is, that the sympathies of the great bulk of people are sure to be so strongly enlisted on the side of the offender, the temptation to undue indulgence is so great, that indiscriminate severity is the only refuge to which men can fly from their own feelings. The features of every individual case admit of being put in such a light that if it were regarded by itself it would be impossible to treat it very severely, and the result would be that there would be no social sanction at all for female virtue. You must draw the line somewhere, and there is only one intelligible way of drawing it.

With regard to men the case is different. If any attempt were made to enforce male chastity by the same sanctions as are and can be applied to women, the social penalties guaranteeing it would be defied by so large and powerful a minority, that the system could not be supported. Men are too strong to be held by such bonds. The attempt to impose them would produce evils which cannot be properly described, but would be felt in every household in the kingdom. The world at large needs its individual members as much as they need it. You can excommunicate a woman by simply refusing to associate with her, for the pleasure which her society gives is the only reason why you do associate with her; she stands in no other relation to the world than the social one. But this is not the case with men. A man is a politician, a country gentleman, a banker, a merchant, a tradesman, an artist, an author, a doctor, or fifty other things, and in this capacity he has something to give to a certain number of his fellow-creatures, which they cannot get without considerable inconvenience elsewhere. For instance, a man's family solicitor, who knows all his affairs, and has done business for him and his predecessors perhaps for generations, who has perhaps lent him money, and keeps numbers of his papers, figures in the Divorce Court in a discreditable way. Whatever the client may think of the matter, he cannot cast off the attorney at a moment's notice, even if he wishes it, and if he did, he would not find it easy to procure a successor who could be warranted immaculate in all his private relations. An eminent banker who is well known as an admirable man of business, and enormously rich, sets the world at defiance in his private relations. Can it be expected, would it be reasonable to expect, that all his customers should immediately withdraw their accounts? It is of course idle to expect anything of the sort. Whether, if the world were inhabited by angels, public opinion would make any distinction

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between the public and private character of individual angels, may be a curious subject for fanciful speculation, but as long as it is inhabited by men and women, it is clear that the distinction will always exist, and that very little notice will be taken in all the public relations of life of a man's private failings. This being once admitted, it is practically impossible to stop there, for there is no broad distinction between public and private life. The two are so much mixed up together that they cannot be separated. Suppose—as is the case with many men—a man bases his claims to private relations entirely on his public character. Suppose he simply sinks and puts out of sight the fact that he has any domestic relations at all, and goes into society simply on the footing of his being Mr. A., the author, Mr. B., the painter, Mr. C., the well-known traveller, or Mr. D., the member for such a borough. It is obvious that people who choose to associate with such a man on such terms, have no more right to ask whether there is or is not a Mrs. A., B., C., or D., or whether if there is, she lives with her husband in the usual way, than they have a right to ask what is their acquaintance's balance at the bank, or whether his bills are paid. The relationship is altogether occasional, and is restricted in its very nature to some particular department in life. It is of the same kind in principle, though it may be different in degree, as the relationship between people who casually meet on a journey, and who would not, or need not, object to chat together, whatever might be their differences on the most vitally important subjects.

Thus the difference between the social rules which apply to the moral conduct of men and women is by no means a mere piece of unrighteous partiality. It rests on a solid basis, namely, the difference between the relation in which society at large stands to the two sexes, and the different degrees of power which it has over them. No doubt if the extreme views of women's rights, which are advocated by some eminent persons, were ever to prevail; if women were ever to cease to be dependent upon men for support and protection; if they came to sustain public relations and characters, if they had professions, and sat in Parliament, and became merchants and landowners, they would acquire by that very fact as much liberty as to their morals, as men enjoy at present. If a man, for instance, made acquaintance, say with an eminent female barrister, living by herself in chambers in the Temple, he would associate with her on the same terms as with her male neighbours, and would no more think of asking the one than the other whether their moral conduct was always exactly what it ought to be. This is obvious, from the fact that in those walks of life where women are independent, and have quasi-public characters, they stand on much the same footing as men. This is the real reason why the morals of actresses, and, in general, women who maintain themselves by their artistic powers, are under a less rigid censorship than those of the rest of the sex. They have an independent standing ground of their own. They can give something which the world likes to have, and cannot get elsewhere, namely, the pleasure of hearing a fine voice, or see-

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ing graceful gestures, and hence they can wring from the rest of the world a corresponding degree of liberty. Society may be right, or it may be wrong in the position which women hold. It may, and also it may not, be true that we should all be happier and better if women ceased to stand in that dependent relation to men which they occupy at present in all parts of the world; but so long as they do stand in that position, the world will be consistent in enforcing by inexorable sanctions a severe moral discipline upon them, and not upon men.

The result of the whole is that those general social rules, compliance with which constitutes respectability, and which are so much complained of by writers like Mrs. Norton, cannot fairly be represented as grievances, except by persons who are prepared to go much further, and to apply the same name to one at least of the fundamental institutions of society itself, as it is constituted here, and in most other parts of the world. Beatrice Brook was wronged by the comparative social impunity extended to Treherne only upon the supposition that women in general are wronged by being treated on the assumption that men ought to do the work of the world, and women ought to keep house for them. Once admit this maxim as the general rule of life, subject to a very few exceptions of little importance, and the rest follows of course.

The general question raised by *Lost and Saved* suggests two or three minor questions which are by no means without interest. In the first place, although we may not think that the authoress any more than her predecessors has convicted the world of absurdity or inconsistency, or that she has made the least step towards anything approaching to a suggestion of any sounder rules or principles than those which in fact prevail amongst us, it may be said, not quite without plausibility, that she, like many other writers, has put a momentary gloss on a very old, well-known, and important truth, which is not unfrequently forgotten —the truth, namely, that the opinion which other people have either of a man or woman is a very poor test indeed of the real worth of that man or woman.

It is no difficult matter to put cases of people worthy of every kind of respect and admiration, who are nevertheless under circumstances in which the world at large will infallibly condemn, sometimes even punish, them. Overlook Miss Brook's faults, and suppose that she had been brought to the position in which she was placed quite innocently—as no doubt she might have been, for instance by a real marriage disavowed by Treherne and incapable of being proved by her, and contracted under circumstances which threw no discredit upon her—and there can be no doubt that her reputation would have suffered whilst his would have been but slightly affected. It is impossible to deny such a state of things might exist, and such stories as *Lost and Saved* no doubt set that admitted fact in a somewhat striking light; but what is the inference from this? That it is very cruel to form such opinions as are formed on such occasions, say, or rather insinuate, the authors of such tales. The reasons already

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assigned show that the insinuation is not true. The true inference is that the opinions which society at large forms of its individual members are of necessity formed upon scanty and insufficient materials, and would properly be described as very unjust if the justice of an opinion implied its truth. They are in fact no more than guesses, which people are obliged to make for their own protection as well as they can, but which the subjects of them ought to disregard, or, at all events, to view with something very like indifference. Justice, in fact, is a quality not to be expected from society. It is not a judge and is not bound to be just, and it is therefore foolish to reproach it with injustice. The true inference from the sufferings of Miss Brook is, that a wise man or woman will do his or her best to cultivate a certain degree of thickness of skin, and to be as independent of their neighbours' opinions as they can manage to be. No doubt the existing state of things makes it extremely hard for a woman to do this, and the effort to do it, especially if it is successful, will deprive her of some attractions, but this is an inevitable evil. The world is not so constituted that everybody can be happy under all circumstances; and almost all the nonsense that is talked proceeds from a tacit assumption that it is. A beautiful and attractive woman is perhaps the most attractive object in nature. She meets with a degree of attention, deference, flattery, and even of sincere and genuine homage, which to male observers seems enough to turn the strongest head, and to constitute the most intoxicating draught which can be offered to he lips of any human creature. This is very like investing one's money in limited liability companies. You may and perhaps do get 20 per cent. for it, but you may wake up one morning and find yourself destitute. High interest, in enjoyment as well as in trade, means bad security, and Miss Brook, and other young women like her, hold their pleasure by the tenure of being at the mercy of the society which worships them. If the bargain suits both parties, there is no particular harm done. Miss Brook gets her incense, the world at large judges her conduct by a practical rule which gives a right result—say five times in seven—one of the unlucky chances falls to her. It is very proper that the rules of the game should be known, but the players must not want to draw stakes if the luck goes against them, and the bystanders, when asked to pity the losers, may be excused for saying that nobody forced them to try their luck. Those who associate with a small number of intimate friends will for the most part have their conduct fairly judged. If they allow their happiness to depend on the opinion of a large number, they allow it to depend on an opinion which must of necessity be formed on very imperfect materials.

Another observation which such stories as *Lost and Saved* suggest arises from the common criticisms upon them. They are always attacked by the same thrust and defended by the same parry. What an immoral book this is, says the critic. I must paint the world as I find it, says the author. Yes, but you should not be prurient, says the critic. No mor I am, replies the author. The last issue—prurient or not prurient—

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involves a different question in respect to every book concerning which it is raised, and need not be further noticed here. The other—the general question—whether such books as *Lost and Saved* are in their own nature objectionable, however well they may be executed, is one of wider interest, and calls for one or two observations which are frequently omitted in discussing it. In the first place it is perfectly clear that nothing but the most wretched prudery would describe as necessarily immoral a work of great genius—the *Œdipus Rex*, for instance—because it turned upon a revolting incident; but it is equally clear that the ordinary run of novels with a moral purpose have no claim at all to be judged on the principles which are proper in discussing the moral value of books of that order. They are almost universally pamphlets conceived from a sentimental instead of a dogmatic point of view. Such being their position, the true objection to them is not that the doctrine which their author means to insinuate would be immoral if it were advocated in express words, but that by addressing the imagination instead of the reason they tend to set the mind as it were on a wrong scent—to draw it away from the broader and weightier matters of the moral law to dwell upon byways and exceptional cases, which to the great mass of mankind are not only not instructive, but positively injurious. Probably there are cases in which falsehood is justifiable, but if a man were to write a novel the point of which was to show what the cases are in which a good man or lovely woman was wrongfully punished for a laudable lie, it would be a very bad service to morality. The mind had much better be led into other paths. In the same way there may be cases in which the common rules as to the relations of the sexes do not apply, but it is not a wholesome thing to seek them out and dwell upon them. The objections, indeed, are stronger in this than in other cases of immorality, for reasons too obvious to mention. If such matters are to be discussed, they should be discussed in the most direct and abstract manner. A novelist, who is not a person of the highest genius, writing a work to last for all ages, should never forget the old motto—*Virginibus puerisque.*

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The Opera in 1833—1863.

"Going to the opera" is a very different thing now-a-days from what it was thirty years ago; and the season which has just closed suggests strange comparisons to those whose memories carry them back a little. It has seen two houses open four, and sometimes five, nights a week. This, of itself, plainly marks the fact that the opera has ceased to be an aristocratic luxury, and has become a public entertainment. The change implies both gain and loss. The enormous diffusion of wealth, bringing with it not only an universal increase in expenditure, but also a more strenuous ambition in all classes to emulate the style of living and share the enjoyments of the Upper Ten, has crowded the stalls and boxes of the opera, and scattered tweed suits and wide-awakes over the Continent, in the persons of pleasure-seekers, who, in my young days, would have been seen in the gallery (if seen at the opera at all, which was rare), or on the sands of Margate and the shingles of Brighton.

Something of this change is due to a more diffused love of music and a more developed culture. There are still numbers who go to the opera because "society" goes there, rather than because music has any charms for them. It is not every tweed suit which moves across the Prado, the Campagna, or the Graben, or languishes in picture-galleries and cathedrals, from any genuine impulse deeper than that of "following the fashion." It was always so; it will be always so. Pleasure-seeking is a grim business to many; and of all pleasures that of Art is the most commonly undertaken from a sense of duty. But although the opera is to a large class merely a place of parade, and would be deserted if music were its attraction, there is also a large and growing class to whom music is one of the highest enjoyments; together, these classes make up a public, which can by no means be satisfied with a single theatre, open two or three nights a week. The aristocratic prestige has gone. The public insists on its amusement. It is as with the Grand Tour formerly performed by a few of the wealthy, now the holiday of professional men, Government clerks, and shopkeepers, great and small. In the old days there was a certain distinction attained by a visit to Paris or Florence, which is now secured only by an exploration of the Nile, or a flirtation with the Amazons of Dahomey. The Continent has become our watering-place; the opera our amusement. There are those who deplore this change. People prone to exclusiveness (and it is whispered that the English are not always free from this tendency) regret the universal presence of *Murray* and the wide diffusion of the British accent; while those who are but moderately pleased at meeting their countrymen abroad (and I

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have known it maintained that "the English one meets abroad" are not always fascinating) protest that the Continent is spoiled. Probably they think the opera ruined, now it is no longer exclusive.

Ruined or not, it is certainly changed. I recall the days when it was almost a private affair, supported almost exclusively by subscription, and visited night after night by the same sets. In those glorious days (think of it, reader!) we could know the aristocracy (by sight and name), and impress country cousins with our terrible familiarity, as the occupants of box after box and stall after stall were glibly named. There were but two performances in each week—Tuesdays and Saturdays. A short opera and a long ballet formed the regular bill of fare. Those were the days of ballet (which I am happy to say is, at least for the present, dwindled to a divertissement, very little diverting), and a new dancer was as much canvassed as a new singer. And ye later glories, Taglioni, Ellsler, Cerito, ye were indeed worth talking about!

How modestly the bill of the day peeped forth under the piazza (and only there), challenging small attention from the passers-by, though it bore the names of Pasta, Ronzi di Begnis, Caradori, Blasis, Curioni, Donzelli, and others; names of magic power to me who used to pause before the dark and silent house, with curious glances at the groups of sallow foreigners lounging about, smoking cigarettes, impressing me with something of the mysterious charm felt in a half-empty theatre before the green curtain was raised, which was to open worlds of splendour to ravished eyes. I had occasionally tasted of operatic joys, and I read every bill with unspeakable longings, till I became as learned in musical celebrities as a reader of catalogues becomes in literature.

Shall I ever again enjoy the opera as I enjoyed it then? My place was habitually in the gallery, which in those days was rarely filled. The servants of the nobility, a few foreigners (with an aroma of garlic), and a few lovers of music, were to be seen there; but the public never presented itself; the public never thought of the opera. Years rolled on, and the public began to overflow the gallery. To meet the increasing demand for places in all parts of the house "extra nights" were occasionally given on Thursdays. In time Thursdays became regular extra nights; then subscription nights; till now we have Mondays and Fridays added as extras; and this not in one house, but, since 1847, in two houses.

Naturally, while such changes were in progress my beloved gallery could not remain unchanged. Instead of the cheap and certain seat, we had soon to struggle for a place at all, after waiting outside, under the piazza, for half an hour or more, and after a rush upstairs little less violent than the rush at the pit on Lind nights; only, as the gallery visitors were mostly men, the vehemence of the struggle was mitigated—for in screaming and crushing, women are terrible. The first innovation of gallery stalls, depriving us of the two front rows for which we had gallantly waited and pushed, was received with grim disgust. Now there

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are stalls at three different prices; and there will probably soon cease to be a gallery; but as I never venture up so high now-a-days, I can hear of the change with great equanimity. The pit also, which used to be delightful, and magnificent in toilettes, when there were only three rows of stalls, has gradually diminished in space and splendour; and at Covent Garden five extra rows of stalls have been added since 1862—not by any means to the comfort of the visitors, since the rows have been brought closer together, and the skirts of the fair but irrational sex have to pass between them, as if through Caudine Forks. And where is Fops' Alley, with its company of swells and senators, men of irreproachable (though slightly hideous) costume, and names famous through the land? Where is the once illustrious omnibus box, with its *lorgnons* turned upon wicked little *danseuses?* where the grand company once resplendent in the first tier? On subscription nights a royal personage, or a great lady, may still be seen, no doubt; but one is never sure that the next box will not be occupied by a Jew money-lender and his Hebrew bride, or by foreign singers and their friends, or by gentlemen of the press and their friends, not to speak of the people who seem to have been "sent for." This is a great affliction to those who go to the opera for the company, and who would like no "nobodies" (but themselves) to be present.

Great also are the changes in the orchestra and on the stage. In my early days the orchestra, led by Spagnoletti, the first violin, was in no respect comparable to what it has become under Costa. It was poor and thin; but the chief performers stood on a sort of friendly footing with the audience, especially Lindley and Dragonetti, whose fine passages were always honoured with special plaudits. In another respect also it more than compensated for its comparative inferiority—I mean as an accompaniment and sustainment of the singing: it never mercilessly drowned the singers, or forced them into the screams and shouts, as our present orchestra too uniformly does. Costa has reason to be proud of his band, and we have reason to be proud of Costa; but he has *les défauts de ses qualités*, and commits the very serious mistake of forgetting the singers. He should reflect that if it be glorious to have a giant's strength, it is tyrannous, except upon gigantic occasions, to use it like a giant. Let his overtures, marches, symphonies, and finales be as brilliant and as overpowering in sonority as he pleases; but let him remember that we pay our money to *hear* the singers, and not simply to see them waving their arms and opening their mouths. While I am objecting, I will also add that Costa not unfrequently so accelerates the time as to pass over the line which separates *brio* from vulgarity.

The loss of the ballet would, to my taste, be a pure gain, since, in spite of the exceptional charms of a Taglioni, an Elssler, or a Cerito, anything more dreary or unmeaning than the eternal pirouettes and grimaces which were, and are, presented as dancing, cannot easily be matched. Decency apart, it is a pitiable spectacle. Not, however, to quarrel with the taste of others, and not to deny that many persons went to the theatre

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mainly for the ballet, I submit that the old plan of separating the opera from the ballet was infinitely preferable to the modern French plan of thrusting ballet into opera, thus forcing us to have both, whether we like both or not. After an *Œdipus* or an *Agamemnon* the Athenians might enjoy their satiric play; as, after *Othello* or the *School for Scandal*, we have enjoyed a farce. In like manner, after an opera, those who enjoy the grimaces and distortions of modern ballet may stay till midnight contemplating such graces. But to lengthen out an opera by the incongruous admixture of a divertissement, is like playing *Box and Cox* between the third and fourth acts of *Othello*. Shall we ever return to the old plan?

My earliest recollections of the opera are of the days when Sontag was the madness of the hour—the Jenny Lind of an aristocratic public. But these memories are vague. Burningly vivid is the memory of Pasta, the unapproachable: she stands out, like Kean, Paganini, and Rachel, among my artistic experiences, as something quite special and unforgettable. Merely because he sang with her, I also remember Curioni, who, I fear, was a stick. It is with Grisi's first season that my steady vision of the past begins: and what a succession of triumphs were those seasons in which she conquered and held her public, aided by Rubini, Tamburini, and Lablache! Suffer me for a moment to call up those vanished images with which so many readers must connect enchanting memories.

It was unfortunate for Grisi's fame with the present generation that she continued on the stage many years after the glory of her voice and person had faded. She was to the last deservedly a great attraction; no one could rival her in her own parts; and "old Grisi," as she was half affectionately called, proved better worth seeing and hearing than the younger rivals who tried to wrest the sceptre from her. Nevertheless, it is only those who heard her between the years 1834 and 1844 who have a real conception of that matchless voice and superb beauty which placed her above all the operatic heroines of our time. There have been finer singers and greater actresses, but no one has been at once so beautiful and impassioned; no one has united her excellences; no one has been so thoroughly satisfactory. *Elvira*, in *I Puritani*, has since been played by Persiani, Lind, and Bosio; nevertheless the opera has been a failure since Grisi ceased to play in it. The part of *Lucrezia Borgia* was written for Caroline Ungher; I saw her play it many times, and thought no one could surpass her in it; but when the opera was produced in London, I confessed that the feverish passion of Ungher was many degrees less admirable than the terrible beauty and large style of Grisi. *Norma*, *Donna Anna*, *Semiramide*, *Nina*, *Norina*—what visions they were!

As an actress Grisi was not eminently *intelligent;* but she was simple and passionate; she *personated* every part—spoke through it, felt through it, carried it directly home to your imagination, so that you never felt she was wearing a mask. Her effects were not produced by cleverly imagined details; her "business" was generally borrowed, or, when

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invented, was not remarkable; but with the large simplicity of a few certain outlines she placed the character clearly before you. In comedy she was not refined, not intelligent, not coquettish, but joyous, hearty, beautifully free from vulgarity, native or affected. In tragedy she could abandon herself to impulse without ever becoming unbeautiful; and so genuine was the passion, that it moved you on the fiftieth night as on the first. The grand fury of *Lucrezia*, when the mask is torn from her face, and the sweep of terrible wrath when *Norma* discovers her lover's faithlessness, were like the great moments of Edmund Kean.

Rubini, so indelibly associated with her, was a marvellous *singer*, and, until his failing voice made him resort to a provoking system of alternate shout and whisper, no such tenor was to be heard. But as an actor he was null. He had no idea of costume, and was often saved from being "a guy" only by his unaffected bearing. He had neither grace nor energy; moving about the stage with an indifference which was at times exasperating, and which you may how see reproduced in the dreary languor of Giuglini, *without* the compensating charms of voice and style. Rubini, in great moments, made his voice act for him, and I doubt whether Rachel herself ever threw more intense expression into a passage than Rubini threw into the curse in *Lucia*. As I said, he was a consummate singer, and in grand bursts of bravura he carried us to the seventh heaven of rapture. Nevertheless, on the whole, I think Mario would have been preferred by most people, when Mario had learned to act, and had not lost his delicious voice. He is undoubtedly the tenor to pair off with Grisi, for the rare union of qualities. So picturesque, so handsome, so graceful a tenor, who is also so admirable an actor, has not been seen; and if he could never sing like Rubini, still one cannot imagine Rubini as *Raoul*, *John of Leyden*, or *Gennaro* satisfying the public which has seen Mario.

Tamburini was a very handsome man with a superb voice, and great power of florid execution. He was a capital favourite with the public, but I do not recall him with the same fervor as the others. His acting was animated and respectable, never above the line. In *Assur* and *Fernando* he was very fine. In *Don Juan* he was rather vulgar, and in *Figaro* fussy, not funny. The acting of Ronconi as far transcends the acting of Tamburini, as the singing of Tamburini transcended the singing of Ronconi.

And what can be said of thee, incomparable Lablache? The simplest expression of opinion must sound like hyperbole to those who do not remember that unrivalled artist; while for those who do remember him, criticism, if it took the perverse form of objection, would seem like an insult. Other singers have been admired; Lablache was loved. He was certainly one of the grandest-looking men ever seen, and had the most superb voice that has been heard in our time, so full, resonant, and equal, *blending* so perfectly with other voices, *supporting* them with firm staccato notes like the notes of an organ, and *leading* them like a clarion. Great in tragedy, and great in riotous humour, the grandeur and passion of the

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one never prevented the most fanciful exaggeration in the other; and he had the immense superiority over Ronconi that his *lazzi* never descended to vulgarity. Ronconi, so fine in passionate scenes, is too apt, in farce, to seek laughter by means such as Wright at the Adelphi found unhappily successful. Lablache never erred thus; a native refinement and a genuine humour always kept him within such limits as the most fastidious would fix.

This remarkable quartette, the delight of the public for so many years, made ample amends for a thin orchestra, wretched chorus, and the worst possible stage decoration. We never thought of anything in those days but the music and the singers. Of late years we have had our attention claimed more by actors, spectacles, chorus, and orchestra, happy if we could now and then hear some good singing. Yet it is worthy of remark that in those days, when Rossini, Bellini, and Donizetti were enchanting the audiences with music which is now acknowledged to have been music, the critics vociferously declaimed against it as trash—mere ear-catching frivolity. Little to the credit of critics is the fact that they set themselves to oppose what is novel in Art, and always presuppose that what is popular must be worthless. Not in music alone, but in all the Arts, they reject what is new because it is new, that is to say, because it varies from the old forms which they have been accustomed to admire. Style always puts them out, until it has become classical. Individuality seems eccentricity. Instead of being grateful for novelty, they seem to resent it as an impertinence. At the present day it sounds strange to hear of the persistent opposition which resisted Beethoven, and of the scorn which saluted the genial inspiration of Rossini; yet nothing is more probable than that a new Beethoven and a new Rossini—men as original and individual—would be rejected to-morrow. I once heard an eminent musician candidly confess that he at first looked upon Rossini as destined to pass away with the hour; and he confessed this at a time when he had learned to regard Rossini as one of the greatest of musical writers. I, too, remember Rossini being decried because he was not Mozart or Haydn; while Bellini and Donizetti were spoken of with measureless contempt. To-day the men who sneered at these writers are sneering at Verdi: an inferior genius certainly, but still a writer who has the poetic gift of melody. Precisely because melody is not a thing of art, it is held cheap by the critics. Fortunately, the public rectifies this error; and among the probable advantages which will result from the democratization of the opera is that of a greater chance, because a wider field, for composers; the prejudices of connoisseurs are less influential when there is a large public to whom the composer can appeal. The public judges with its ears, and not according to critical canons; if music moves and delights us, we are very tolerant of outraged orthodoxies; and although it is true that the mass of men are by no means exquisite in taste, it is also true that among the mass there are *all* degrees; and, therefore, when a man of genius can present his work to a crowd, all who in that crowd have any real affinity

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with the work will welcome it. Against a closed corporation it is hopeless to struggle; from an audience of critics, no *novel* work could hope for recognition. When the public has accepted the work, and the cultivated connoisseurs have assigned its rank, then the critics will enlarge their canons for its reception. It is thus that Rossini, Bellini, and Donizetti have triumphed over opposition. There is, of course, much to be said on the other side, especially as to the exclusion of noble music, owing to the impatience of the uneducated ear. A more refined sensibility would assuredly banish Flotow, and welcome Glück; would care less for *La Traviata*, and more for *Fidelio;* it would also be less tolerant of vulgar attractions in the shape of spectacle. But this one must hope will come. The public taste has already been greatly elevated; and just as the desire for reading, which is at first stimulated by trashy novels, rises at last into a sensibility for higher literature, so we may hope that the delight in music of a lower order may be the foundation of a genuine delight in the highest.

It must be confessed, however, that just now the changes are taking a dangerous direction. Partly from inherent, and partly from accidental causes, the *musical* element of opera has become more and more subordinate to the *dramatic;* and, as a natural degradation, the dramatic element has all over Europe succumbed more and more to the *theatrical* element. The drama was first stripped of its poetry and character, in favour of prose and situation. It rapidly passed to spectacle and "sensation scenes." The ideal was replaced by the domestic. Comedy gave way to farce and extravaganza. The audiences became more numerous, and arts which delight the mob were found both easier to present, and more attractive when presented. This also has been the course of opera; the theatrical element has gained predominance. Melody is to opera what poetry is to the drama; in proportion as this, the highest source of enjoyment, is weak and tentative, the lower sources are invoked; and the composer who feels himself deficient in grace and beauty, relies on his "treatment" of the orchestra, the piquancy of his ballet, or the tempest of his climaxes. In lieu of a lyric to touch the feelings, he presents us with a procession of vast splendour. Instead of expressing musical *emotions*, he is ingenious in expressing *meanings:* as if the end and aim of opera were to make musical phrases follow closely the various meanings of the words. The climax of this error is seen in the theory and later operas of Wagner; and it may be lucky that such a *reductio ad absurdum* has so soon been achieved. Let any one hear *Lohengrin* and *La Gazza Ladra* on two consecutive nights, and decide between Meaning and Melody!

The accidental causes to which allusion was just made are chiefly the absence of melodists and the influence of Meyerbeer. Germany has no melodist at present. Italy has one in Verdi; but his limited, vehement, feverish, and careless genius is on the whole disastrous, not simply from its ruinous effect on singers, but also from its giving opera a markedly melodramatic tendency. His operas are French plays set to music. I do

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not refer to the fact that several of them are actual versions of dramas; but to the more significant fact that all of them are animated with the feverish, exaggerated, unlovely spirit which reigns on the stages of the Boulevards. Verdi has no comedy, not even a smile; he has little grace, and his tenderness is apt to be bitter. His passion is mostly querulous, screaming, ignoble. He is a noisy and fatiguing writer; but young Italy applauds him, and Europe accepts him because of a real vein of melody.

The immense talent of Meyerbeer has enabled him to establish a new kind of musical entertainment, containing, it must be confessed, much less of the musical than the theatrical, but combined with a skill which is irresistible. As a variety his operas are welcome. If one could hear them occasionally after Mozart, Glück, Rossini, and the rest, they would be delightful; but unhappily their great attractiveness to the mass gives them a fatal eminence; and "grand opera" threatens to drive *musical* opera from the stage. The danger can only be averted by the fortunate appearance of several fine singers. Mozart and Rossini wrote for accomplished vocalists, and their works cannot effectively be given by crude executants. Rachel revived the classic drama of France, and arrested the dangerous tendencies of the romantic drama for a time. In like manner a Grisi or Rubini, adequately supported, will revive the musical drama. The success of Patti has given us *Il Barbiere* and *La Gazza Ladra*, *L'Elisir* and *Don Pasquale*, operas which cannot be effective with screamers and bawlers. One or two more lucky chances, and Covent Garden will be able to revive operas which depend more on their music than on their accessories.

Without taking a despondent view one is, however, forced to confess that, as regards singers, the present condition of our operatic houses is far from hopeful. We have had some great artists; but the breaches of Time are becoming noticeable, and the young aspirants promise little. Look at Covent Garden. It has three splendid ruins in Mario, Ronconi, and Formes. They exist in virtue of their reputation. They have ceased to count as singers. Mario, graceful, charming, and passionate as an actor, may still be seen and heard with pleasure in light parts—*Almaviva*, for instance, or the Duke in *Rigoletto*, or Lionel in *Marta*—though one is always trembling lest his voice should entirely give way. Ronconi, also a wonderful actor, is worth *seeing* for the sake of his passion and grotesqueness, but his singing hardly rises now above that of a vaudeville singer—out of tune. Formes has become so wretchedly uncertain as to give more pain than pleasure. Yet, who are to replace these? If the "old guard" is invalided, where are the new recruits? Naudin is not the tenor to replace Mario; Ciampi cannot be offered for Ronconi; and Obin failed to hold the place of Formes. The prospect is not encouraging. Tamberlik remains, with all his fervour, but with the bloom of his voice passed away. Faure is the only male artist on whom we can confidently count; he is the best baritone in his way since Tamburini.

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With the *prime donne* the prospect is more radiant. Patti is deservedly a great favourite, and is very young. She continues steadily improving, every fresh character being a fresh triumph. For light sparkling music and coquettish comedy she is exquisitely endowed. Her voice is not of the most charming *timbre*, but it is extensive in compass, delicately flexible, and well under control. Her acting is full of intelligence and charm. But Nature has emphatically excluded her from the great parts of serious opera; and the repertory of Grisi calls for another artist: this will assuredly not be Mdlle. Fricci; is there any hope of its being Mdlle. Lucca? I fear not. Her success in *Les Huguenots* was certainly great enough to make us look forward with some interest to her future career, but at present she has almost everything to learn. Her voice is penetrating and metallic, not sympathetic, yet its ringing *éclat* seems to delight the public. Her acting is at present in a lamentable state of amateurishness; lamentable, not because she is stiff and awkward, defects which practice may remove, but because she is so utterly insensible, her face during the tempest of emotion being quite immovable. No, the only successor to Grisi at present acceptable is Titiens, and she is not at Covent Garden.

There is no denying that whatever inferiority in other respects may be assigned to Her Majesty's Theatre, the superiority in singers and in enterprise belongs to it. Titiens, Alboni, Trebelli, Santley, Giuglini, and Sims Reeves have made the theatre a formidable rival. Then, too, the manager, though he has failed to make good his promises, has at least produced two new operas, *Niccolò de' Lapi*, which was a failure, and *Faust*, an immense success. He has also revived *Oberon*, and given us *Don Giovanni* and *Le Nozze*. Altogether lovers of music cannot complain this year of deficient variety or interest in the works presented at both houses. If promises on both sides have been less rigidly adhered to than subscribers may approve, and if the caprices of singers have thwarted the intentions of managers, still the works actually produced have been such as to make a goodly show. At Covent Garden we have had nineteen, by Mozart, Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, Verdi, Auber, Meyerbeer, Flotow, and Gounod—namely, *Don Giovanni*, *Guillaume Tell*, *Il Barbiere*, *La Gazza Ladra*, *I Puritani*, *Norma*, *La Sonnambula*, *Don Pasquale*, *L'Elisir d'Amore*, *La Figlia*, *Rigoletto*, *La Traviata*, *Il Trovatore*, *Masaniello*, *Les Huguenots*, *Le Prophète*, *Robert le Diable*, *Marta*, and *Faust*. We have *not* heard *Otello*, *Orfeo*, *Fra Diavolo*, *L'Etoile du Nord*, and Verdi's last work, *La Forza del Destino;* and—for which we may be thankful—M. Flotow's *Stradella*. Surely, when the desire for novelty is so great that even M. Flotow's works are dragged forward, it would be worth a manager's while to venture on those noble operas of Glück, now only to be heard in Berlin? At Her Majesty's Opera we have had fewer operas, only fifteen; in twelve of which Titiens has performed. These operas have been by Mozart, Weber, Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, Verdi, Meyerbeer, Schirra, and Gounod—namely, *Il Don Giovanni*, *Le*

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Nozze, *Oberon*, *Il Barbiere*, *Norma*, *I Puritani*, *Lucia*, *Lucrezia di Borgia*, *La Figlia*, *Il Trovatore*, *La Traviata*, *Il Ballo in Maschera*, *Les Huguenots*, *Niccolò de' Lapi*, and *Faust*. Of the new singers who appeared during the season, only Mdlle. Artot can be considered an acquisition.

The one musical event of the season has been the production of *Faust*. In the present condition of the musical drama this opera is, excusably, somewhat overwelcomed; but, allowing critical severity to make what deductions it pleases, and M. Gounod's rank among composers to be hotly disputed, no one will deny that it is an opera of rare ability and interest. Popular it is, and must be; the intense suggestiveness of its subject, and the brilliancy of its treatment, are certain to delight the public. Unlike all other grand operas, it is uninterruptedly engaging; and for four hours holds us without a moment's weariness. I do not deny that there is much to be desired, nor will I affirm that it ever rises to the "height of its high argument;" but it is very interesting, and at times very seductive. Considering how much of its effect is derived from approximating to Goethe's matchless poem, one cannot but regret that the composer was not aided by more intelligent librettists, who would have seen that their commonplace stage-carpentry was a poor substitute for the conceptions of genius.

The first act is the weakest—is, indeed, very weak. Its adequate treatment requires a Beethoven. He alone, of all known composers, would have been equal to the mysterious sadness, and the noble anguish, of Faust's soliloquy; and he, assuredly, would have grappled with those scenes which M. Gounod has wisely evaded—scenes which, though perilous, offer splendid scope to a composer: I mean the appearance of the Spirit, in his garment of flame, uttering those crushing words of scorn:—

> "Du gleichst dem Geist, den du begreifst
> Nicht mir!"

and the Easter Hymn breaking in upon Faust's despair, very inadequately replaced by the chorus of peasants. Throughout this act M. Gounod is vague and tentative. Even Mephistopheles, who has afterwards a marked individuality, is here without character.

The second act opens with the Kermesse, and its joyous strains leaping from group to group; the old men's chorus especially being very piquant, and having much of the character of our old English melodies. Masterly is the skill with which the various motives are wrought together at the close. It is a pity that the fine opportunity of Auerbach's cellar, so admirably seized by Prince Radzivil, in his felicitously characteristic music to Goethe's *Faust*, should have been evaded by M. Gounod. Meyerbeer would certainly not have given up such a chance of representing the mirth of vulgar sots, and the irony of the Flea-song. M. Gounod replaces it by the characterless music of Wagner, and the mediocre *Dio dell' or*. He is, however, singularly successful in the delightful waltz-chorus, and the delicious phrase, only too provokingly brief, with which

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Margaret crosses the stage—both belonging to his finest inspirations. Altogether the act is delightful. In point of effect few things are finer than the scene in which the students subdue Mephistopheles, by presenting the crosses of their swords—a scene superbly declaimed by Santley, and finely acted by Faure. But its position betrays an imperfect sense of construction: the curtain ought to fall on such a climax as that; or, if the composer chose another climax, there was one at hand in the exit of Margaret after rejecting Faust's advances; this would have been a climax not less poetical than the scene with the crosses was theatrical; it would have left the emotions tremulous with poetic suggestions. Instead of this, the effect of Margaret's appearance is blurred by the commonplace and ineffective resumption of the waltz and chorus, which is no climax at all.

The third act is very effective. How much of its effect is due to Goethe's incomparable love-scene, it would be difficult to say; when *Faust* is played as a drama, the scene has a witchery surpassing all other love-scenes on the stage; and it is followed pretty closely in the opera. The opening air for Siebel is pretty, but commonplace; and the tenor air, *Salve! dimora pura*, betrays the composer's melodic poverty; it is a mere feeling about for melody, with one or two sweet phrases. Then comes the ballad of the King of Thule, a ballad already so set that a composer might well feel uncomfortable in re-setting it. M. Gounod has given it a touching quaintness and monotony. The casket scene was a fine opportunity, but has not been adequately rendered. The quartette which follows is broken and tentative: one longs for a gush of Italian *largo* and fervour. A similar defect, though less in degree, strikes me in the love-duet which succeeds; and most people will find it difficult to understand how any critic could place this duet above the great duet in *Les Huguenots*, on which it is founded. The difference may be illustrated by this, that after the passionate scene with Raoul and Valentine, anything else would be an anti-climax; whereas after the scene with Faust and Gretchen, comes the sweet close of Gretchen at her casement in the moonlight, confiding the thoughts of her young love to the quiet air,—and this without an anti-climax.

Whoever considers the separate pieces of this act, and remembers the charming effect which it produces as a whole, will see that a delicate problem in operatic art is before him. Separately, none of the pieces rouse much enthusiasm; yet the whole act steeps us in delicious languor. This is greatly due to the poet who conceived the scene; but it is also due to the felicity with which the dramatic feeling is kept up, and the skilful blending of the various emotions.

The fourth act is artfully contrasted with this quiet love-scene. It opens rather feebly, but the spirit-stirring chorus of returned soldiers, commonplace in motive, yet admirably treated, the devilish serenade sung by Mephisto—perhaps the most original bit in the opera—the trio which succeeds, and the death of Valentine, are the writing of a master; and

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even finer in composition is the cathedral scene, with its contrasts of solemn gloom and agonized despair. The music of Gretchen might have been more passionate and pathetic; but the effect of the grim tempter desolating her soul with menaces is finely contrasted with the pealing organ and the chanting monks.

The opening of the fifth act—to judge from the score—is judiciously omitted in London; and we have only the brief passionate scene in the prison, with its triumphant climax, the sweep of which, when Titiens sings it, is irresistible. Nothing is tolerable after such a climax. Goethe felt that the poem should close with Gretchen's appealing cry. Instead of this poetic, dramatic, and musical close—thoroughly satisfying to the mind—M. Gounod has consented to a vulgar bit of stage-carpentry which parodies a well-known picture; as if no one would believe that the poor little Gretchen was saved, unless they witnessed her ascent to heaven after the manner of the last scene in a pantomime.

Having thus briefly indicated an opinion of the several acts, I will confess that my first hearing of the opera was a great disappointment. The music had been over-praised, and expectations were raised which could not be gratified. The obvious poverty in melodic invention, and the absence of any marked novelty in the forms—which were but too plainly founded on those of Meyerbeer, with snatches of Schumann and Mendelssohn—made it difficult for me to understand the praise I had read. It is true that I heard it under the disadvantages of the coarse execution of Her Majesty's chorus and orchestra, where the tyranny of the wind instruments, especially the brass, at times became painful; nevertheless, making every allowance for execution, it still seemed to me that Gounod was only a younger brother of Meyerbeer; and hearing *La Gazza Ladra* and *L'Elisir* after *Faust*, was like hearing fine compositions after a brilliant improvisation. On a second hearing—this time at Covent Garden—my expectations having been lowered, the pleasure was greater; on a third hearing this pleasure was increased; but familiarity with the music on the piano has not substantially altered my first impression. Without rising to the height of Meyerbeer's best moments, the opera is more uniformly agreeable.

With regard to the execution, at neither house was it satisfactory. The beauty and skill of the "mounting" at Covent Garden were indeed rare; but, except Mephisto, the principal parts were very inefficiently presented. A more fatally uninteresting Margaret could hardly have been chosen. That Madame Miolan Carvalho was the "original" heroine may, to some minds, be a fact of peculiar value; but it in nowise modifies the painfully prosaic and lifeless picture she presented. Her highly finished vocalization, admirable as it undoubtedly is, could not make amends for her person and manner, especially when her reedy soprano tones had to bear comparison with the magnificent voice and energy of Titiens, who, in the leaping, clamorous exultation of the finale, was like one transfigured by passion. Titiens is certainly not so accomplished a vocalist;

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but in every other respect her Gretchen was incomparably superior. Tamberlik was perhaps never heard to less advantage than in Faust, the music lying unfortunately for his voice, and being ill adapted to his fervid style. Those who admire Giuglini would of course admire his Faust; to me he is the most uninteresting of tenors. Graziani's noble voice is unhappily accompanied with an amount of histrionic intelligence on a level with that of Giuglini; and he was consequently far below Santley in the part of Valentine. The Mephistopheles of Faure was as admirable as that of Gassier was mistaken. Faure knew very well that the Tempter was not to be played as a fat, impudent, good-natured pimp. Costa's band—when it did not drown the voices—was everything that could be wished; Arditi's band was not by any means what could be wished, even when it did not drown the voices.

Such was the season of 1863. One cannot conscientiously call it a brilliant season, nor can one, without large hopefulness, see in it the prospect of a return of that splendid epoch when Grisi, Rubini, Tamburini, and Lablache held us under a spell; nor indeed of that epoch, less removed, when Grisi, Alboni, Mario, Ronconi, and Formes, made Covent Garden triumphant. Yet I would fain look upon the present as a transition-stage, and hope that the immense stimulus given both to composers and singers by the universally diffused taste for opera may restore the vanished splendours of the past. If this is to be, it must be by subduing the present fatal tendency towards *theatrical* encroachment on the *musical* element. The supremacy of music, and in music of melody, must once more be recognized, unless opera is to be dragged down to a spectacle. This will also restore *singing* to its rightful place; and we shall have less bawling and screaming substituted for vocalization. No one who has recently undergone operatic performances in Italy will doubt whither the present style is rapidly tending. Is it the degradation of inevitable decay? Is it the transition to a new and higher life?

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Contemporary Italian Poets.

No. 1.—Giovanni Prati.

The little village of Dasindo, in that wild and beautiful district of the Italian Tyrol called *Le Giudicarie*, was the birth-place of Giovanni Prati, whose name holds a very prominent place, and twenty years ago occupied one still more striking, on the list of Italy's living poets.

He comes of the gentle blood of the family *dei Prati*, whose ancestral house, reduced within not very many years to ruins, stands, to use the words of a note to one of his poems, "in a small meadow, whose wild-flowers are watered by the lonely little river Sarca, which crosses it to bathe the desolate walls."

In that quiet country house, which the poet in his manhood was destined to see changed to a dismal deserted shell by fire, he was born on the 15th of January, 1815; and there, hedged in by the old-world ruralities of an out-of-the-way district, among a loving and numerous home circle, his boyish mind and body healthily expanded, gathering strength and thoughtfulness from the grandly picturesque scenes amid which he dwelt, and which, both as child and man, he loved with passionate exclusiveness.

The first year of Prati's life was that which saw the dissolution of the kingdom of Italy, and the subjection of Trent and the Italian Tyrol to the iron gripe of Austria. His family were staunch Napoleonists, and, as may be supposed, an indignant hatred for his country's new masters and oppressors early took root in the child's heart. The story goes that it was the false report of Silvio Pellico's death in the dreary dungeon of Spielberg, which flew through Italy when the poet was yet almost a baby, that first called his patriotism up in arms; for, asking his father who this Silvio was, and what he had done that everybody was sorry for him, and being told that he was a good and wise man who had tried to free his country, he innocently inquired if "loving one's country could be a crime?" and then and there received his first lesson in the political faith of his after life.

Prati was sent to school at Trent, from whence he only returned home every year for an autumn holiday of a few weeks. He was a quiet, studious boy of far more than average capacity for learning; and when the vintage months brought him home laden with prizes for study and good conduct, he would pass his time in long mountain rambles, with fowling-piece and knapsack, very sparely furnished with money indeed, but always containing a well-thumbed Dante, and a tattered copy of

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Plutarch's *Lives*. Thus equipped, he delighted in clambering to the highest peaks of that mountain region; often spending the nights at the remote summer-huts of the herdsmen in the highest pastures, where he frequently paid for his humble board and lodging with the produce of his day's sport; storing his memory with snatches of the rude legends and superstitions so rife among his hosts. He met, too, in these early years, with a most remarkable amount of perilous accidents, which had no doubt their share in shadowing his mind with a certain morbid notion of fatality and predestined sorrow, which shows through all his healthier poetry. A fall from horseback down a precipice; the breaking of the ice on which he was skating; the bursting of his gun; and a stab in the arm intended by an enraged peasant for a fellow boor, at a village festival, are among his narrow escapes.

At fifteen Prati left the school at Trent, where he had achieved a juvenile celebrity by his classical knowledge and his fluent writing of Latin, and went, in 1830, to the University of Padua to study the law, which, as it seems, he never practised; although in the year 1834 he took his degree as doctor *in utroque jure*.

It was while at the university that Prati reaped his first laurels as a poet, by the lyrical improvisations which were the delight of a company of his fellow-students, who were wont to pass away the sultry summer nights in open-air instrumental concerts, sometimes in the country, sometimes beneath the windows of the city belles.

Scarcely returned home from the university in 1834, Prati made a love-marriage, when yet only nineteen, with his beautiful play-fellow Elisa Bassi, a young lady of Trent, of his own age. Of three children who were born to him within the next five years, one little girl, Ersilia, alone survives. The other two, with their fair young mother, before the close of 1839, were laid at rest in the *Campo Santo* of Dasindo.

Flying from the insupportable memories of his old home, the widower again went back to Padua, and there, urged by his friends to strive against the intellectual apathy which was gaining upon him, he composed and published *Edmenegarda*, his first work of any considerable length, and one that, by its somewhat Byronian sentiment and melancholy grace, kindled a veritable passion of enthusiasm throughout "Young Italy." The story is one of marriage-ties betrayed by a heroine, less guilty than unfortunate, to follow a totally unworthy seducer. The incidents of the tale are in great part true, and the fair frail heroine was no other than the sister of the noble Venetian patriot, Daniel Manin. The betrayed husband is represented in the poem as an Englishman, but this is a mere poetical fiction.

The matter and the manner of this eloquent blank verse love-tale of modern life were totally new to the passionate young readers of the Peninsula, accustomed to sate their poetic hunger with the husks of worn-out classicism. Prati grew famous on the strength of this his first work, published in 1840. Two years later he went, surrounded by the nimbus of

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his new popularity, to live at Milan, where he speedily published three more volumes, containing his *Lyrical Poems*, *Poems for the People*, and *Ballads*. Among this collection may be found some of the best and most original of his works, although here and there one can hardly help tracing a flavour of imitation, as in *La Fuga*, and *Ruello*, to Bürger's *Lenore;* and in one or two of the ballads, to the more fantastic poems of Sir Walter Scott.

In 1843, the poet quitted Milan for Turin. Austria was already looking aslant with a jealous eye at his literary success, and he justified her suspicions by making his début at Turin in some fine and spirited verses, entitled *Lines written to the Order of King Charles Albert, in* 1843. They were to have been set to music and sung on some public occasion, but were found to contain such a rouse to the national feeling of Italy, that the performance had the honour of being prohibited by more than one diplomatic protest.

In the same year came out Prati's only prose work, the *Letters to Mary*. It consisted of a series of quaint and graceful art-criticisms, in which many trace a far-away likeness to some passages of Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*.

Two new series of poems came out in the following year, 1844: *Memories and Tears*—a sort of Italian *In Memoriam*—and *New Poems*, dedicated to his just widowed mother. He returned in the same year to Dasindo, where he lived for awhile with her in close retirement, till hunted thence by new misfortunes. Within a few months, he saw his dear old home destroyed by fire, his mother laid in the grave, and a beloved brother stabbed to death, while trying to separate two villagers engaged in a mortal quarrel.

Stunned by these sorrows, Prati removed to Venice; and, in 1847, published at Padua two volumes of *Solitary Rambles*, comprising a number of lyrics which contain some of his saddest and sweetest snatches of melody. The poet flung himself with heart and soul into the revolution of 1848, when his *Political Poems* were chiefly written. He was, with so many other Italian patriots, a staunch believer till the last possible moment in the slippery promises of Pio Nono, and a strong constitutionalist, and admirer of the luckless Charles Albert. These political sentiments won him small favour among the hot-blooded Venetian republicans, even though he had but just escaped from the exile and fever of an Austrian dungeon, where he had been confined for months. Neither in Tuscany, where Guerazzi and Montanelli were hoisting the cap of liberty in 1849, did Prati meet with a more cordial reception. Narrow party-spirit, in those stormy days, stigmatized him as a man "sold to Piedmontese influence;" and, saddened and disgusted, he was fain to leave Florence, and make his way to Turin, where his home has since been fixed.

The *Political Poems* contain more than one noble prophecy of the glories which now shine on his regenerated country, though then only

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seen dimly through the disastrous blood-mist of 1849. *Rodolfo*, a poem published a year or two later, portraying the adventures of a sort of Italian Don Juan of improved morals, has also a political colouring, as has his latest production of any great length, *Ariberto*, which numbers King Bomba and Cardinal Antonelli among its *dramatis personæ*, and carries its hero from Marsala to Palermo, in the victorious wake of Garibaldi. Besides these works, the few last years have given birth to *The Court of Riga*, *Satan and the Graces*, and, in 1855, a variety of minor poems.

A complete edition of Prati's works, including some hitherto unpublished poems, is in course of publication in parts, and will be completed, in from eight to ten volumes, in the course of next year, at Milan.

As a follower (though by no means a servile one) of Manzoni, and as one of the most successful engrafters of the romantic and fantastic ballad on the poetic literature of his country, Giovanni Prati's poetry has achieved a wide and well-deserved celebrity; and the lash of his satire, falling on the loose living of many of the Roman priesthood, has won for his works the distinction of the *Index Expurgatorius*, and from St. Peter's throne a threat of excommunication.

The following specimens are selected for translation from Prati's poems, as giving an idea of his different *manners*. They are necessarily chosen from among the shorter pieces, in order to present each specimen entire to the reader, and are rendered with strict fidelity not only to the sense, but to the rhyme and metre; although no small portion of the music and rhythm, of which Prati is avowedly a most skilful master, must needs evaporate in the translating:—

KING ALBOIN'S BANQUET.

King Alboïn's mighty halls are ringing
With rebecks loud, and voices singing.
From all the realm the peers are met;
And proudly set.

With glistening gems and golden sheen,
—The banquet's glory and its queen—
Smiling beyond her wont, sits there
Rosmunda fair.

Red in the circling goblets shine
Rich foaming draughts of rarest wine.
Men's wits are lost in cloudy mazes;
While fiercely blazes

The King's dark eye with evil light,
Like his own dagger sharp and bright:
While harsh rude laughter from the crowd
Bursts long and loud.

They mocked this lovely land, deflowered
And wasted by their conquering sword.
They praised the wealth of vines which vest
Each hill's green breast;

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And for these peerless dames of ours,
The dastards call them fragile flowers,
Gay, stately, fair, but prone to fall—
Slaves, one and all!

Mid that vile orgie's ribald tide
Rosmunda sate, perchance and sighed;
She, not yet dragged by deeds of evil
Down to their level.

"Princes and barons! Page and squire!
There sits my fairest heart's desire,"
(Thus, drunk alike with wine and sin,
Quoth Alboïn.)

"Look on this lady near my throne,
So gay, so proud, so all my own.
'Fore God! she's of my diadem
The truest gem!

"Love! wilt thou gold-wrought garments wear?
Wilt have three hundred feasts a year?
This Italy's a wealthy mine.
Speak! All is thine!

"But, that my chiefs may tune thy praise
When home returned, in fitting lays,
And night and day breed envious strife
In maid and wife,

"Thy gifts and graces I'll unfold.
Thou'rt soft of heart, Mass Robert told
The world ere now. Thou'rt chaste as snow;
I say 'tis so!

"With thy lithe shape and step of air,
All men can see that thou art fair.
Now, prove, Rosmunda, that thou art
Of fearless heart."

Then, to her hand, with red wine full,
He held her father's naked skull,
Sneering, "Take this, and never shrink!
Rosmunda, drink!

"For me his blood! My wine for thee:
Such, fairest love, is destiny.
Thou kissedst him in dying pain,
Kiss him again!

"And thou, all hail! King Cunimond,
Who comest from the world beyond,
Unfleshed, my household joys to view,
Kiss thy child too!"

The mockery of their drunken lord
Woke hellish plaudits round the board.
"Welcome, King Cunimond," they said,
"Where hast thou stayed?"

"What! ne'er a hand-grip to thine host!
By heaven! how now? thine eyes are lost.
See, too, Rome's desecrated son!
Hair thou hast none!

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"Speak, long lost warrior! Cousin King!"
The monarch cried, "what news dost bring
From the next world? I pray thee show—
Thou'rt sure to know—

"If we, in peace and full-fed cheer,
Shall hold thy realm for many a year
And for what price may God decree
Thy crown to me?

"Thou eyeless guest, so white and still!
Kiss the sweet rose that's near me still.
Lo! how she waits thy fond embrace
With ash-pale face."

Such words the drunken monarch saying,
With the white skull sate grimly playing.
Then thrust it in her hand, who cried,
Shuddering aside,

"Hold, Alboïn! Hold! so dread a sign
Thou dar'st not ask from lips of mine!"
"Drink, woman, without more ado!
I will it so!"

She drank; but in her burning gaze
Was writ, "The vengeance but delays.
Thou Lombard king! those veins of thine
Shall pour *my* wine!"

. . . . .

A year since that high feast is flown.
Deep sleeps the drunken king, alone.
Rosmunda on her chamber-sill
Stands mute and still.

There, with a fair-faced warrior bold,
The deed of blood is bought and sold;
And hark! at dawn, a touch, no more,
Sounds on the door.

"Thou, Almachild! What tidings? Speak!"
"A dead man's rest is hard to break!"
Then, the rude helm which shadowed low
Her champion's brow

She raised, and, "Sweetest love," quoth she,
"This crown far better graces thee.
'Twas dark with crime; wipe off the stain.
Kiss me and reign!"

Such is the tale. If wild and strange,
The rugged truth I may not change.
When Italy i' th' age of force
Was put to nurse,

Right many were such deeds of crime;
But in our smoother, wiser time
Less savage are our feasts, our lives,
Our men—and wives!

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THE SPY.

(From *Poems for the People.*)

With downcast eyelids, with hungry ear,
Thou dogg'st me, shadow! near and more near.
I greet a comrade, and straight I feel
Thy stealthy presence, close at my heel.
Villain, I shudder as thou com'st nigh!
Thou art a spy!

But when thou eatest the bread whose winning
Costs thee this lifetime of abject sinning,
Stands not the spectre of treachery there,
Frowning beside thee? Dost thou not fear?
Villain! I shudder as thou com'st nigh!
Thou art a spy!

The sun should yield thee no cheering beam;
No man should call thee more by thy name,
But by *that other* which doth bespread
Thine unblest table with shame, and bread.
Villain! I shudder as thou com'st nigh!
Thou art a spy!

My heart has pity, ay, on the thief;
It gives lost woman a tear of grief;
Nay, o'er the murderer in gyve and chain
Some furtive token it sheds of pain.
But thou!——I shudder as thou com'st nigh.
Thou art a spy!

Hence with thee, villain! Slouch thy hat low;
Wrap thy cloak tighter round thee, and go!
And if one moment these words of mine
Weigh down thy spirit, seek out some shrine,
And sob, "God help me!" and wait and cry,
"I am a spy!"

There only, kneeling low at that throne,
Pardon may visit sin like thine own.
Scared by thy treasons, under the sun
Every man flies thee; kin thou hast none.
Villain! I shudder as thou com'st nigh.
Thou art a spy! *

MAIDEN SECRETS.

(From *Poems for the People.*)

"Why do you wear that torn and faded dress?"
"Because my love once kissed its hem, and I
Kiss it for ever in the self-same place,
And sure I am I do no wrong thereby.

---

* The foregoing verses give a very true and by no means exaggerated picture of the abhorrent loathing with which the Government *sbirri* were throughout Italy, and are yet, in Rome and Venice, regarded by all classes. The English reader, happily for him, can form but little idea of such a feeling.

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I kiss it every morn and every even,
As though it were a talisman from heaven;
Ay, and with greater love than, when a child,
I kissed the blest Madonna's image mild."
"Silence, for shame! If our confessor knew—
He'd surely say the Lord was not with you!"
"He knows; I've told him. Good old man! he said
That 'tis less grievous sin to love this *one*,
Than live before my glass, like you, instead,—
Laugh with each fop you meet, and care for none!"

HOME AND DEATH.

SONNET—(From *Memories and Tears.*)

He that is forced by bitter proof to try
Those arts through which our troublous human kind
Whirls on its tortuous courses, with a sigh
Turns back to kiss his cradle left behind.
He that hath seen foul deeds, snake-like, unwind
Their length from honied words, and smooth ways lie,
And bad men o'erbear good, beneath God's sky,
Turns back to kiss his cradle left behind.
Ay! dearly do I love that humble home,
Unheeded by the crowd, where o'er the brain
Visions of childhood's life can freely come;
Nor less than that dear roof whose melodies
Call down sweet rest on baby eyes again,
Love I the home where no more wakening is!

THE 8TH OF FEBRUARY, 1848, AT PADUA.*

(From *Political Poems.*)

God! who hast said to us
"Vengeance is mine!"
Why with those death-darting
Arrows of thine
Strike not the merciless
Vandalic hordes,
Who in our hearts' best blood
Crimson their swords!

Lo! how thy people lies
Helpless and lone;
While the fierce sabre-charge
Strikes, and sweeps on!
Oh! ye invincible
Valorous crew!
Warm on our pavement stones
Lies the red dew.

Up! wilt thou hear us not,
Great God of might?
Italy's blood is poured
Forth in thy sight;
Blood of our chosen ones—
Blood of our youth,
Craving in agony
Respite and ruth.

Red drops of martyrdom!
Current fraternal!
Rise in a lurid haze
Round the Eternal!
Say, that while bathed in you
—Bathed as with water,—
Still the barbarian dreams
Deeds of new slaughter!

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* These verses were written two hours after the events, well known in Italy, took place. They refer to some acts of intolerable barbarity and cruelty perpetrated by the Austrian soldiers.

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But if God's timely hand
  Longer delay;
Fling remorse far from you!
  Cast fear away!
Brothers in woe! we are
  Weary of life;
Out from the scabbard, then,
  Dagger and knife!

And 'gainst these pitiless
  Beasts of the North,
Each village tocsin ring
  Fearlessly forth!
Stop us not, stay us not,
  Mother or friend!
Passed is the frontier-line,
  Suffering must end!

Silence and sorrow
  We've borne with too long,
Under the pelting
  Of insult and wrong.
Up, from the far Alps
  To Sicily's Tower,*
Brothers, to arms again!
  This is the hour!

Serpent and dove no more
  Mated can live;
Blood they demand of us,
  Blood let us give!
Have they not dared us
  To ravage and kill?
So be it done to them;
  Give them their will!

Peasant and artisan,
  Rise like a flood;
Look on your fallow fields,
  Smoking with blood!
Greybeards and suckling babes,
  Rise, people! rise!
Crush the life out of these
  Murd'rers and spies!

Hordes of Sennacherib,
  Cymbrian marauders,
Lusting for flesh, have long
  Harried our borders.
Ay! for ten centuries
  Our blood was poured
Warm in the drinking-cups
  Crowning their board.

Now let each street and lane,
  Wood-pile and byre,
Court, square, and shop supply
  Brands for the fire.
Thundering on all sides,
  Like hail-storm and blast,
Launch flame and sword on them!
  Pay them at last.

Ghosts of our ancestors,
  Up, from your graves!
Swathed in your winding-sheets
  Hunt the false knaves.
And on their savage rout,
  Tyranny-led,
Rush, every soul of you,
  Living and dead!

Down with their swords and flags!
  Bear all before ye!
Theirs is the infamy;
  Ours be the glory!
Three are our champions
  To ransom the sod:
Hate for the German;
  Our Country; and God!

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* The Faro.

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How we Slept at the Châlet des Chèvres.

WE were a party of three pedestrians, namely two sisters, A. and M., and one brother, G. The former had been developing their walking powers during a stay of two or three months among the woods of the Jura by such rambles as ladies might take unaccompanied, and the advent of the male person of the party had long been looked forward to, as opening up a number of excursions too extensive or too ambitious for solitary females. In fact, they were not solitary: but the other members of the family party lacked the physical power requisite for their long climbs, and could scarcely feign a sympathy with what foreigners know as the English mania for wandering and mounting.

And yet it was strange that the clear air of the mountain village had not supplied the one, and the tempting beauty of the scene the other. Below was the lake, with its broad frame of flat and richly wooded country, stretching away to the west till lost amid the glancing skylights of Geneva; the whole plain lying hot and parched under the terrible August sun, and suggesting feelings of self-gratulation to the fortunate spectator who stood at a cool level on the hills; Mont Blanc meanwhile, instinct with glittering life, flashing his snowy mantle against the cloudless sky on the opposite side of the lake, and imparting an irresistible impulse in the direction of a mount into the higher glens, where, even in the Jura, the snow and ice were yet unmelted in the pits, and a cold breeze might be secured in the middle of the hottest day.

The excursion to which this paper owes its origin came to pass in this way: the three young people already mentioned were sitting in the covered balcony of the châlet where their family had spent the summer; no one thought of raising an eye to look at the evening glories of the Savoy Alps, for the magnificent view had become an every-day matter; the lake at their feet, for so it seemed to be, though twelve hundred feet of elevation and some eight or nine miles of road cut them off from it, displayed in vain its sunset dress—they were *blasés* for that particular

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view from that particular spot; the balcony was now a place for reading and work, though once it had been devoted entirely to gazing.

A. and M. were busy with their work, giving fitful accounts of their mountain walks to G., who was by turns an attentive and inattentive hearer as the volume of Tauchnitz proved interesting or the reverse. One of these excursions, on which they appeared to dwell with peculiar delight, had taken them to the top of a high cone of rock, comparatively bare of trees, which rose abruptly about half an hour's climb above the wooded glades forming the summit of the Jura. They said much of the beauty of the view, of the clearness of the air, of the difficulties of the road, and of the one blind path which they had discovered by following the complicated directions of a châlet man, given in unintelligible *patois*. At the very top of this rugged cone were four walls and a part of a roof, being the remains of what had once been the *Châlet des Chèvres* —the goats' châlet.

At this point G. became so far interested as to raise his head and ask what sort of shelter the old châlet would afford in case of a storm?

"Very good," they asserted, "if the window-holes were a little filled up, and anything in the shape of a door forthcoming."

"Any signs of a fire-place?" G. asked.

"Yes!" cried A., quite breathlessly, and with distended eyes, "such a charming hole in the roof! the smoke couldn't help going through!"

"What do you think," G. continued, almost brought to silence by the eager interest with which A. hung upon his words, "what do you think of spending a night up there, to see the sun rise?"

"Mamma! mamma!" they ran screaming off, "he's proposed it himself! we didn't say a word about it!" and much clapping of hands ensued, not unaccompanied by groans, or rather murmurs of protest, from the elderly lady whose slumbers were thus broken in upon. It turned out that this idea of camping in the châlet for the sunrise had been for some time in A. and M.'s mind, as possibly to be carried out on G.'s arrival, but the prudent heads of the family had determined that it was impracticable; and, more than that, had been confident that G. would be the first to think so, unless it were very artfully put before him. The spontaneous insanity which he had now displayed was a stroke for which they were not prepared, and all direct opposition was at once broken down. It was agreed, however, on all hands that at least two of the three aspiring excursionists should pay a previous visit to the châlet, to see what its capabilities really were, before they committed themselves to the labour of carrying up the things necessary for spending a night within its walls.

Accordingly M. and G. went one day to survey the place, and after some hours of agreeable climbing reached the châlet, which they found (a foregone conclusion, it need not be said) perfectly fit for their purpose. The walls were so thick that large stones could be piled up in the holes which had served for windows, so as to keep out some of the night air

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and all less pleasant visitors, and there were a good number of planks lying about which would serve to raise the sleepers from the damp ground. Above all, they discovered in a corner a very respectable piece of door. There were three compartments inside the châlet: the middle, where the principal hole in the roof was, for kitchen and eating purposes, the two ends for bedrooms, one horribly dark and still, the other light and very draughty. So that on the whole they were justified in taking a flourishing account of the accommodations of the place to their friends below, and also a goodly basket of the spoils of the way in the shape of bilberries and strawberries, which went far to remove the slight opposition still kept up on conservative principles.

The preparations were not very great. Bedding was for long a vexed question, for every native told shuddering tales of the cold of a night on the hills, and warned the mad English that wraps would be more necessary than food itself. Fortunately the protesting parents of the party were guiltless of French, and so the full force of these representations never reached them, for all the interpreting passed through the hands of the pedestrians, and the energetic little landlady's wailings over their probable fate were perhaps not rendered into English of equal vigour and spirit. So they settled the question by taking no rugs—in fact the heat on the lower part of the hills promised to be so great (and it fulfilled its promise) that a rug would soon have had to qualify for a shroud, had they attempted to carry one. Those miserable *duvets* gave the greatest trouble, for there was no gainsaying the paternal arguments which asserted their lightness and powers of compaction, and the only way out of the difficulty was by an unqualified assertion that Madame Dorier would not like her clean *duvets* to be put to such a disreputable use. Unfortunately, Madame was so extremely kind and obliging that the stay-at-home faction were confident that she would accede to the request for the *duvets*, if the matter were properly put before her; after which nothing was left but for A. to say that *she* hadn't the face to ask it, and positively *could* not do it, M. and G. shrugging sympathetic shoulders and declining to have anything to do with so unreasonable a request.

The bedding was a great weight off their minds and backs, and at length their ideas of what would be necessary were brought within the requisite bounds. A. and M. so far bowed to maternal authority as to strap each a shawl to her waist, the two ends hanging down, and that was the sole extra wrapping they took with them. Each had also a flat basket of food, similarly fastened, and an empty quart bottle. All three carried toilette apparatus, and a small basin and saucer, with spoon and knife. M., who was a sturdy little person, undertook the teapot, a strange Swiss copper vessel exactly like a brown owl in shape, which was wont to be perched on a stone by the kitchen fire whenever it was expected that the English would require warm water. Like the shawls and baskets, M. slung this to her waist; but lest it should bump too much it was put under the skirt of her dress, by which means its vagaries were suffi-

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ciently restrained. G. carried on his back, knapsack-wise, a coat and waistcoat for night use, for it was much too hot for anything more than a shirt in walking, and, wrapped in these, a vast loaf of spherical form cut into halves to economize packing-room. Also a small bag-knapsack, wherein was a bottle of Langlade wine, an empty quart bottle for milk, and an empty tumbler for butter, these to be procured at the last châlet, an hour and a half from the goats' ruin. At the last moment before starting, a Vicuna shawl, soft and light and warm, was brought by the maternal hands, and it was declared authoritatively that if G. did not wrap up his coat and the hemispheres of bread in this, the party simply should not go. This being a matter which no interpreting ingenuity could stave off, G. was victimized, and the shawl had the advantage of seeing the sunrise.

At last they were off, amid the ill-omened prophecies of the anxious landlady, which they did not think it necessary to explain to their equally anxious parents. Mounting began literally the moment they left the door, for the house was built on so steep a slope that the ground-floor at the back, from whence they issued, was a high balcony-floor in front. After a hard and hot ascent through beech woods for half an hour, they stopped for a minute or two, nominally to admire the view, really to rest a little. The view, however, was well worth the few minutes devoted to it, for they had now reached the first plain, a green lawn from which the hay had been four days removed, where the châlet *La Violette* stood. The fresh green grass, and the beautiful bell-shaped beeches which rose from it in picturesque groups or still more picturesque solitariness, were in themselves sufficiently fair; but as the travellers stood well back on the plain, and turning southward saw the pure white of the upper half of Mont Blanc, cut short off by the fairy lawn from which they looked, the effect was simply magical. Fifty-five miles of land and water lay between the meadows of La Violette and the snows of the White Mountain, but all was hid from view by the green crest over which the path had lain, and the ice and snows seemed to be as near and refreshing to them as the lovely young grass of the vast lawn.

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Keeping their object sternly in view, they soon left La Violette behind, and an easy half hour brought them to the "convent fountain." Every one knows so well the provident wisdom displayed by the monks in their choice of sites, that it is needless to tell how the convent fountain was famed through all the southern slope of the Jura. The water poured through a wooden pipe into a huge trunk trough, which lay in a soft green plot of grass surrounded by beech-trees, among which the mounds that marked the convent walls might be traced with great accuracy; so much so that the dormitories round the centre building might still be counted, and the solitary cell be seen a stone's cast from the mass of the convent.

A. and M. had in the course of two or three months become so deeply enamoured of the beauties of this fountain, that they had set off, a week or two before the present visit, with a large stock of pots and pans, and had cleaned out the trough, even scrubbing it well into the corners with nail-brushes. This sufficiently explained the angry exclamations which broke the stillness of the monks' old home, when they found sundry pieces of plebeian bread floating in the water. The poor raspberry gatherers, who had steeped their dry dinner in the fountain, came in for a large amount of vilification, and an unfortunate little bird, whose feather polluted their pet trough, was apostrophized in all the strong words of a lady's vocabulary.

Neither bread nor feathers, however, prevented them from applying to the pure source. A. now displayed her chief weakness, which took the form of a passion for cold water on a hot walk. Water by itself was a sufficient delight, but when she had her little red glass with her, there really were no bounds to her potations. That little glass was her idol, chiefly, as was believed, because it had once been sat upon and had come out uncracked from the ordeal. She was always told that she would kill herself, and on particularly hot walks G. had been known to wax very cross as the tumblerfuls mounted up to the high numbers; but on the present occasion she was obliged to be more moderate, being called upon to tell how "the seigneurs" were allowed three weeks to change their

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religion, and how they followed the example of the North British monks at Ripon, and chose rather to desert the convent, carrying their silver with them, before the three weeks expired. She had learned the tale from a deboshed-looking old man, whose wife complained that no work could be got out of him now that the English ladies let him walk about with them and tell them lies.

They left the convent fountain not without regret, for the next good water was miles away, and the afternoon was so terribly hot that all were more or less affected by a partial mania, similar to A.'s chronic complaint. Once off, however, they thought no more about the water, for the sudden changes from wood to open, and from open to wood, kept them in a constant state of delight, while every step crushed a hundred little flowers, which formed the design of the soft carpet on which they trode; so that on the whole the hours seemed to have passed very quickly when they found themselves at the *Châlet de Grantène*, patois for *Grand Ennaz*. This was the last piece of humanity on the way, and here they were to complete their stores by filling the empty bottles and tumbler.

Fortunately they reached the châlet a few minutes before the afternoon milking began, so they were exactly in time to accept the offer of a bowl of new milk from the hospitable head of the establishment, a fine Bernois with grey head and eagle nose, and meanwhile seated themselves in the cool butter-room to drink *'tit lait*. For this last purpose the visit was not well timed, for the full benefits of the refreshing qualities of *'tit lait* are only to be enjoyed when it is on the balance between hot and cool, and now it was cold, and therefore heavy.

The men had already armed themselves for milking — a somewhat curious process, presenting a most remarkable appearance when accomplished. The interior accommodations of a châlet are becoming so familiar that it is almost unnecessary to describe the "chair of the mountains," as the châlet men pleasantly style their itinerant seats. Each milker possesses a stool, which, when not in use, may be taken for a small round shield, with a boss at the centre a foot long, shod with pointed iron. This stool is strapped

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on bodily in a suitable position, and when a man gets up, his stool of course gets up with him, so that when he comes out with his pail of milk to the huge copper caldron ready to receive its contents, he appears with a stiff stump of a tail behind. One would have thought that three legs would have been easier to sit upon than one, but undoubtedly the prevailing arrangement is much more picturesque and ludicrous. To an unpractised Englishman the manœuvring of this caudal appendage is a great difficulty, for the strap round the hips is tight and cramping, and renders locomotion undesirable; while to sit down in any soft place is attended by awkward consequences, as the leg inserts itself into the ground according to the weight of the sitter, and has him at a considerable disadvantage as soon as he attempts to get up.

The advent of "the English ladies" about milking-time at any of the châlets in the neighbourhood always elicited a number of those inimitable milking songs from the men, and with these they now amused themselves until the firstfruits of the first cow were brought by the Bernois himself with much politeness, and with a grace which few Englishmen would have achieved with a foot of wood and iron for a tail. The milk was strained for them into an inexpressibly white tub, round the edges of which hung three wooden spoons of large capacity, carved by the châlet men. The sieve was a remarkable apparatus, consisting of a wooden funnel with an aperture large enough to admit a female fist, if such a thing exists; into this aperture a bunch of spruce twigs was squeezed, something like what you extract from the crop of a capercailzie, and through these twigs the milk was poured.

Having consumed the best part of a small cow, the pedestrians proceeded to fill the quart bottle from another tub, and gave the tumbler to the Bernois to be filled with butter. He was anxious that they should take a little brick of *serré* (hard cheese-curd), but they could not carry up sufficient milk to make it palatable, and so declined the offer of the tempting-looking mass. A. and M. quite fell in love with the old man, because he was the first person who had not attempted to dissuade them from making their beds in the goats' châlet, and, above all, because his bright eyes became brighter, and his tail wagged sentimentally, when he divined their purpose in the expedition, and spoke of a sunrise as if he felt its charms, and could sympathize with any effort which had so worthy an object. He made them promise to call in the morning and tell him how they had sped; and then, seeing they were ready to go, he made off to his cows again, waggling his little tail behind him.

A hundred yards or two brought the party to the last water, and here they filled the remaining two bottles, and then steadily set their faces towards the grey cone which now became visible, rising up from the undulating plains and woods which crown that ridge of the Jura. The road to the foot of the cone was beset at each step by prolific tufts of blueberries and strawberries, but as the sun was drawing down fast towards the horizon, and they contemplated a sunset as well as a sunrise

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from the solitary elevation, they had not much time to spare: moreover, G.'s digestion was not in a state to allow him to eat crude fruits, so he stalked on inexorably at a pace which it required all the sturdiness of M.'s short legs, and all the length of A.'s long ones, to keep up with.

So far they had not come across any real mountain climbing, although it had been a severe ascent the whole way; but now they reached the base of the cone, and began to wind up its almost perpendicular sides. It certainly reflected great credit on A. and M. that they had discovered the path, guided by an excelsior instinct which they always displayed when near a mountain: to uninitiated eyes there was no reason for going to the right rather than to the left of sundry groups of trees, no apparent object to be gained by going below instead of above certain fragments of mountain; but when all the obstacles which clustered round the foot of the cone had been surmounted, and the three stood on the clear face of the rock, it was seen that there had been a method in their windings which no path had pointed out, and the male person of the party expressed (and possibly his companions felt) great admiration for the feminine ingenuity which had threaded the difficulties without a guide.

M. had a weakness for performing all her excursions in a roomy crinoline, and it had been an amusement to A. and G. the whole time to watch the peculiar forms into which the inflated petticoats were driven by the superincumbent weight of the copper teapot, slung, as has been said, under the skirt of her dress. These peculiarities were considerably increased now that she came to lay herself well down to the steep climb, and one consequence was that she persisted in going last. This worked badly in one or two ways; first, because she knew most about the road, and her directions from the rear often came too late; and, secondly, because they had now come to the region of *griffes de chat*, and as M. was particularly attached to that fruit and there was no one behind to drive her, A. and G. could not get her on. Eventually they missed the sunset,

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and the others silently attributed it to the unlucky combination of teapot and petticoats and precipice which had let M. loose upon her pet fruit. *Griffes de chat* are not very tempting things either; resembling an irregular blackberry in shape and size, and a half-ripe barberry in colour, and, it may be added, in sourness.

At last they reached the top, and pressed eagerly into the little hut, to see how it looked now that they were really dependent on it for a night's shelter. There is no denying the fact that their hearts rather sank, for it looked incredibly gloomy and the air was one mass of midges; the left-hand compartment, which had been dignified with the name of the double-bedded room, was so perfectly dark that for anything they could see there might be bears or wolves or wild boars hiding in the corners, for the neighbourhood could supply all those horrors on occasion. Clearly nothing was to be done till they got a good fire; so they hurriedly rid themselves of their encumbrances, and after a mad panic for a second or two when no one knew where the matches had been put, and another more subdued fright when the smoke refused to go out by the hole in the roof, they succeeded in establishing an excellent blaze, which soon cleared the midges away and made the place look quite comfortable. A little arrangement of small boulders formed a capital fire-place, and benches were easily made round the fire with the planks and logs which were strewn about the châlet.

A., meanwhile, had set off to make what use she might of the fast failing twilight to gather strawberries for tea, and G. now started for a more pretentious load of fire-wood, such as should suffice to keep the fire going till the morning. M. was left to make the tea, and to set out the various kinds of food which the whims of three people had brought together. The tea-making process was a simple one, as there were no complications of kettle and urn and teapot; the copper owl, set on a stone in the fire, was filled with water, and when this boiled the tea was thrown in and sent to the bottom with a spoon.

Before very long, A. had exhausted the twilight and G. had collected a sufficiency of wood, and the two returned slowly, not to say wearily, to the camp. By this time all appearance of day and of Mont Blanc had vanished, and the moon made vast pillars of moonshine on the surface of the lake, now between three and four thousand feet below, itself being twelve hundred above the sea. The scene which presented itself when they reached the door of the châlet was a perfect picture. M. had large talents for neatness and orderliness, and her utmost skill had been most successfully exerted on this occasion. On a large raised plank were arranged the different foods, according to their proprietorship; ham for one, hard eggs for another, corned beef for a third, with a hemisphere of bread and an abundance of sweet Swiss cake for the party in general. One of the three had so far defied public opinion as to bring a piece of Gruyère with abominably orthodox smell; before the evening was over, however, public opinion waxed hungry, and shared the cheese with the owner. On

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such excursions nothing is equal to a well-made *wurst*, if only one has a knife with a very sharp blade to cut it neatly; the Jura, however, is not the habitat of *wurst*, so the party had none. Opposite this stall was the fire, blazing away as only gipsy fires can blaze, the blackened little owl simmering contentedly on its warm perch, while on two suitable projections from the walls composition candles burned cheerfully and bright. The whole was a mass of brilliant illumination, and in the midst M. moved about with neatly-festooned dress and short hair. "Short" is not usually an epithet of praise when applied to a lady's hair; but in this case it is so, for M. having once had her hair cut short in a dangerous illness looked so well in it that she yielded to the solicitations of her friends, and ever after kept it almost as short as a boy's. This nearly got her party into a scrape at the French fort of Les Rousses, which is in so unpleasant proximity to that Dappes valley lately ceded to France; for the day of their visit to the fortress being windy, G. was seen by some of the soldiers to assume a pair of blue spectacles when he came to the dusty glacis, and evidently even this excited their suspicions; imagine, then, how they bristled with the importance of detecting spies, when a sudden gust lifted off M.'s hat and concealing veil, and displayed a neat man's head of hair!

Picture or not, A. and G. were too tired and too hungry to stand long at the door, or hole of entrance, to look at it. Accordingly, they speedily pushed in towards their provisions, and as soon as the milk-bottle and the butter had been brought from the window-hole in which they had been set to cool, proceeded to attack the food. It was found at once, however, that the fire was too hot, although the tea stall was as far from it as the limits of the hut would allow; so a screen became necessary, and G. felt a peculiar pleasure in running a couple of alpenstocks through the maternal Vicuna shawl which he had been forced to carry, by which means it was suspended from what remained of the rafters.

When the tea came to be poured out, it issued from the pot almost black, and in answer to the exclamations of A. and G., M. said, "Oh, yes,

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of course she had put in all the tea; wasn't she meant to do so?" This was a bitter blow to the others, who had set their hearts on a refreshing cup at sunrise; M., however, fertile in expedient, at once extracted the leaves from the pot and spread them on a stone by the fire to dry, remarking that the present tea was strong enough without them, and they would make good enough tea in the morning, as they had been in the water a very short time. At a later period of the evening, A. took it into her head to sit down, quite promiscuously, upon this very stone, and so carried off the nucleus of the morning cup on her dress, thus making G. the only one of the party who had not plotted against the sunrise tea, a fact which at once reconciled him to its loss.

When there was really nothing more to be extracted from the owl or the bottles, the three adventurers made a promenade on the little plateau on which their castle stood. The lights on the opposite mountains were wonderful. High up on the Alps a flame would appear for half a minute, large and clear, and then vanish; sometimes there were five or six full broad lights all in existence at once, stretching from the extreme east, among the Bernese Alps, to the grand Salève and the westernmost Jura. Brilliant beyond all, however, were the distant lights of the Grand Quai of Geneva, each given in glittering duplicate by the still waters which border the current of the Rhone. The wooded plain, too, at the foot of the cone of rock, seemed to be one blaze of bonfires, large trees burning as they stood, and black figures, frightfully like Hartz demons, apparently jumping about in the flames. This added immensely to the effect of the night scene, and the travellers congratulated themselves largely on their good fortune when they learned the next day that the men of a châlet below had chosen this particular night for clearing away sundry groups of trees, in order to increase the neighbouring pasturage. At eleven o'clock, or thereabouts, the moon disappeared, and it was time to think of bed. On this point an important change had been made in the arrangements. The left-hand compartment of the châlet was so exceedingly dark and gloomy that A. and M. preferred the idea of sleeping by the fire in the warm central division, which had so far been used as kitchen and drawing-room. G.'s apartment, on the other hand, was so utterly exposed to every breath that chose to blow, and was in such a litter with bits of stone and tufts of grass growing here and there, and pieces of plank lying in all directions, that he came to the conclusion that all three had better sleep in the same place. Planks and logs were accordingly arranged so as to form planes of various inclinations, as each one fancied, on which they might lie with as much comfort as may in the nature of things be extracted from hard or soft wood, the present material being decidedly hard and presumably damp. Then all had a final half-bason of heated red wine, the very worst thing it is possible to take before going to bed; the fire was made up with solid logs; the piece of door was dragged out of its corner, and propped so as to cover a maximum amount of the hole by which entrance to the hut had been won; sundry

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holes almost as large, by courtesy called windows, were so far blocked up with stones as to render it a difficult matter for any one to get through from the outside—though who should attempt to get through, except the mountain demons, no one could say, and they didn't suppose that stones would stop *them* if they had a mind to come. At the same time it did seem very probable, or at least very possible, that the startling appearance of a large and sustained fire in the *châlet des chèvres* might draw some of the rough men from the châlets below; and so, while laughing at the idea of its being in any sort of way a necessary precaution, G. thought it wise to make his fortifications as strong as possible. By common consent a fine club was rescued from the fire, to be used as a defensive weapon in case of need; then the party proceeded—not to undress, but to dress themselves, G. assuming his waistcoat, for so far a coat alone had been almost too much, and A. and M. wrapping little handkerchiefs about their heads in the approved style. After this they proceeded in a body with torches to investigate the dark corners of the rejected double-bedded room; and finally the candles were put out, and a half-trembling "Good-night!" wished all round.

Of course each of the three had determined to lie as still as a mouse, and make no noise to disturb the others; but somehow one's bones do come through to the skin so very soon when the mattress is composed of roughish five-inch planks laid gridiron-wise, that one or other was generally on the turn; and however well it may fit at first, a hollow place in a log of wood doesn't do for a pillow as a permanency, especially when the rest of the log is very knobby, and the dozer's head wanders uneasily from one knob's point to another.

When all was over, each had a hazy recollection of a black dream, the leading idea of which was a sleepless night; but whether the sleeplessness was a reality, or, as so often happens, merely an unpleasant dream, no one could feel quite sure. While all was yet perfectly fresh the reports ran as follows:—G. believed that he had slept in every new position for a minute or two, until his bones came through, when he turned and slept again, and

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so on; M. asserted that she had not slept at all, but had lain in tolerable comfort for some time, after which she got up stealthily and sat by the fire; A. confessed at once that she was seized early in the night with a fit of the horrors, and lay till daybreak in a state of blank fright. It was remarkable, however, that neither A. nor G. knew anything of M.'s sitting by the fire, and that each thought the other had slept tolerably soundly all night, which threw an air of suspicion upon every one's story. On the whole, each of the party would probably endeavour to disabuse any rash young friends, who might be similarly inclined, of the idea that under the given circumstances a night is short or a log soft.

At length M. announced, in a voice that was clearly glad to be heard again, that it was four o'clock, and that something like colour was beginning to appear in the sky; upon which all started up with great alacrity, privately making wry faces at their hard beds, but each unwilling to say the first word of abuse. The door was soon knocked down, and the fire, still smouldering, resuscitated to a magnificent extent; a cup of Langlade and a little roasting fortified the party for the morning air, and then all three issued forth from their shelter and waited for day. M. had been for some weeks busy with a christening frock for a small niece, and having prudently brought a piece of it with her, now sat down on the highest rock of the plateau and proceeded vigorously with the large-stich parts in the doubtful light.

Already there was enough of diffused twilight to render Mont Blanc perfectly visible. Though the lake lay full in view, and the whole range of Alps and their neighbour hills for two hundred miles displayed their jagged horizon of grey rock and snowy points, the eye could rest on nothing but the king of mountains. The marvellous resemblance which the outline from the north bears to a massive human head, reclining on a pillow of snow and facing the east, was never more striking than now. The straight forehead, the short finely-chiselled nose, the firm mouth and flowing beard, all lay calm and still in the grey repose of death. No one who affects

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to see a likeness to the old Napoleon's head can have had the opportunity of seeing the mountain as it now appeared; no one who has so seen it can consider it much short of positive blasphemy to liken that strong and delicate profile to the features of the ill-tempered and vulgar Emperor.

M. had not much time for her embroidery. There came first, for a single instant, a suspicion of a ray of light intercepted in the neighbourhood of the Diablerets, and the next moment a simultaneous cry, their first and last, from A. and G. announced that the sun, still invisible, had struck the highest crest of hair which gathers on the brow of the gigantic head. For a few minutes each instant brought a new delight, as the different levels of peaks were successively gilded by the rising sun. Gradually the glittering points seemed to descend, fixing in turn upon all the salient features of the profile. The mountain woke into life under the magic touch of light and heat: the face was no longer dead, it seemed visibly to rejoice in the reappearance of its daily companion and friend.

The great power of the sun for the last month or five weeks had added much to the illusion which is owed to the peculiar outline of the mountain, for exactly where the shoulder of the reclining giant would naturally lie, a huge black precipice had been exposed by the melting or sinking snow, and fifty or sixty miles of distance reduced this to the very fac-simile of an officer's epaulette.

The choicest beauties of the scene did not last long: nature is not prodigal of her highest efforts of light and shade: the mountains and the snow remained precisely as they were when the first herald of the sun appeared, but the peculiar charm had left them, only to reappear when another favourable combination should allow the grandest portion of our world to assume again for a while its loveliest dress. No sooner had the sun risen than its hydraulic power began to mar the scene: a haze spread over all the plain towards the west, and only paused for a moment in its upward progress to afford a hurried view of the distant tops of the French hills, picked out against the unmeaning sky by the golden messengers of the sun.

With more of awe than they cared to confess, and in silence which they almost dared not break, the three adventurers turned at length to the hut which had afforded them so kindly a shelter. It required some effort to shake off the feeling that oppressed them; and all felt a certain relief when a few light words, and a palpable return to the more commonplace circumstances of their position, expelled the overpowering reality of a too great beauty. It has never come back upon them in its full force; perhaps never will do so: the human mind is not capable of retaining a *living* recollection of a scene whose loveliness is divine; the utmost that can remain in the memory is the consciousness that at one period of existence a beauty too great for comprehension has stirred the soul, too pure for words, which has yet left behind it a certain intelligence not

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possessed before by the mind, a certain proneness to discover beauty where it is not strikingly and prominently visible, an inexhaustible consolation in the idea that the best feelings of heart and mind have been face to face with the most perfect impersonation of Nature, and have carried away from the meeting some portion of her reflected divinity.

There was no object to be gained by a longer stay on the plateau, so as soon as G. had put the finishing touches to the letters which recorded, and probably still record, the initials of the visitors and the precise date of their visit, and when all packing was satisfactorily completed, the descent commenced on the opposite side of the mountain. The object of this change of route was principally to arrive as soon as might be at a châlet where water for ablution could be procured, and milk for breakfast. Each step disclosed such masses of wild fruits in virgin ripeness that G. left A. and M. to indulge their appetites, and hastened on to engage a cow, fearing lest the morning's milk should all have been put into the cheese caldron before the party could arrive. This would certainly have happened, for there were only two cows unmilked when he reached *Le Couchant*, or, as the patois map of the commune gave it, *Cu-au-tzin*, rendered by the natives (in English letters) *Tsoo-ow-tchang*.

A. and M. having at length arrived, the three proceeded to the well, an immense circular tank of water iced by the feverish night they had passed. Through a small round hole cut in the fir-trunks which formed the cover, they drew pailful after pailful of exquisitely pure and cold water by means of a balanced pole, and revelled in the luxury of sponging head and neck and arms with unceasing and undiminished enjoyment. The unfortunate cows were on short commons of water, all the minor sources, if there were any, being dried up; and, knowing well the meaning of the round hole in the cover of the reservoir, they crowded round the washing party and pressed somewhat unpleasantly upon them.

Thus G., for instance, was wholly engrossed in giving himself sponge shower-baths from a pail freshly hoisted up, standing with head bent

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submissively to receive the grateful stream, when suddenly the odour of new milk came with overpowering strength to his nostrils, and he felt his hair caught up with a sound like that of a thousand lampreys, a misguided cow having taken a fancy to the abundant water contained in it. A. and M. had less ponderous but more persistent tormentors, in the shape of sundry goats, which evinced an insatiable desire to browse upon their hats and wicker baskets, and were of course able, unlike the cows, to climb up to them however high they might be hung on the heaps of firewood.

The craving for fresh water was at last in some measure appeased, and with invigorated appetite they proceeded to a small paddock enclosed by stone walls, where they lay on their shawls under the shadow of the châlet, with their faces turned towards the sweet west wind. Here one of the civil men brought a white tub of milk, round which the three lay to breakfast, the remaining hemisphere of bread and a fresh supply of butter completing the feast; but as if that were not enough, the head man of the châlet, pleased with the money which had been prudently given him as soon as the cow was engaged, and instigated by his native liberality, brought in addition a whole goat, as to its milk, in a separate bowl, and, greatest treat of all, a perfect little goat's *tomme*, reclining in a bower of fresh gentian leaves. It was well that one of the party had brought a small, a very small bottle of brandy to qualify the milk, for indeed the quantity taken needed something to qualify it. No one can understand the full force of the temptation who has not found himself lying on soft green grass (a Vicuna shawl, say, intervening), lulled by the deep or tinkling bells of the authors of his feast, fanned by a Jura breeze, and shaded from the early sun by a Jura châlet, a white wood bowl of the purest possible milk rippling its gentle blandishments before his eyes, and a tastefully carved wooden ladle suggesting the means of making those placid smiling charms his own.

M. alone could in any way be called temperate; she was the owner of the brandy-bottle, and not being able to imbibe much milk even when disguised with brandy, she soon retired from all active part in the meal, and, making over the brandy to G., worked composedly at her niece's christening frock.

One thing alone could be called a drawback. In one corner of the paddock there was a small breach in the loose wall, and through this an inquisitive young goat essayed to visit the party. They knew well enough that once in, it could not be driven out, and the chances amounted almost to a certainty that, in evading expulsion, the little wretch would frisk itself into one of the milk bowls, and leave the paddock in general in a state similar to that of the room whose occupant was annoyed by a blue-bottle fly, so that it was necessary constantly to make up the breach with temporary fortifications, which the persistent goat as constantly pulled down. Blows—gently administered, it is true—were of no avail, and only seemed to increase its curiosity; but, by one means or another, the

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enemy was kept out, G. groaning sadly over the interruptions which the repairing of the defences cost him. It is perhaps not fair to say that this was the only drawback, for A., whose friends were wont to call her slightly fastidious, was troubled by a small species of slug, which the lovely grass she admired so much seemed to produce in considerable numbers, and which, disdaining their native soil, showed an unvarying and unanimous desire to repose on the shawls of the party.

At length it was time to start for the lower regions, by a wood-road which led round the base of the cone to the Châlet de Grantène. We have not space for describing the triumphant *jodeln* of the friendly châlet men there, or the congratulatory tremulousness of their master's tail; neither may we tell of the excitement which all Arzier felt on the return of the mad people. Perhaps, also, it is unnecessary to add, that for some months none of the party could shew the slightest indication of cough or cold without calling forth maternal groans over that night on the summit of the Jura.

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Art Criticism.

Amongst the various items which go to make up a newspaper, we occasionally find a column or two of criticism on the Exhibitions. These criticisms are not, in general, very entertaining or attractive reading, and it may be questioned whether anybody ever reads them fairly through. They are looked over with some anxiety by the youngest artists, skimmed and dipped into by visitors to the Exhibitions, and skipped by the rest of the world. They are probably inserted from the feeling that literary notice of some sort is due to the acknowledged importance of the Fine Arts. On the whole, the periodical appearance of these contributions may be accepted by painters as a compliment to their profession. The present writer is by no means disposed to regret the existence, or deny the possible utility, of printed art criticism. It appears to him a natural and necessary product, growing inevitably in every country that possesses active artists and an abundant periodical literature. The object of this paper is not to weaken the influence of the true critic, but rather to strengthen and confirm it by attempting a definition of his functions.

But it may be doubted whether all who write on art, or even a large proportion of them, are qualified by previous study to form opinions whose publication is desirable. It would be interesting to have an authentic list of anonymous art critics, to know what are their usual avocations, and what proportion of their lives has been devoted to the study of art. Ferdinand de Lasteyrie tells us that fewer qualifications are required from Parisian art critics than from any other writers for the French press; that the most inexperienced youths begin with the criticism of pictures, which is considered to require so small a stock of information, and so little judgment, that any raw boy may undertake it. Theatrical criticism is, however, in Paris, on quite a different footing, and editors take great care to employ qualified writers for that department. The cause of this difference is obvious. The Parisian public is itself a good judge of theatrical art, but no judge of pictorial; it therefore at once detects a pretender in theatrical criticism, whereas an ignorant critic of pictures may write on in perfect safety. The tendency of an advancing general culture is therefore to elevate the tone of printed criticism by excluding ignorant writers from the periodicals.

Many persons interested in the Fine Arts are beginning to feel that a great change must, before long, come over the tone of current art criticism; that the duties of the ordinary critic will be better understood and more worthily fulfilled, and that the relation between the critic and the artist on the one hand, and the critic and the public on the other, will

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become sounder and more serviceable than heretofore. The writer of these pages considers the present time opportune for an attempt to indicate what seem to be the most important functions of art criticism. The five volumes of *Modern Painters* have now been for some time before the world. The international picture exhibition of 1862 drew forth an immense mass of printed comment, and the present year has seen the birth of a *Quarterly Review* exclusively devoted to the Fine Arts.

The functions and duties of an Art Critic would appear to be very much as follows:—

1. *To utter unpopular truths.*—The reader may perhaps suspect me of putting this so prominently out of sheer perversity. But it is the first and most important of critical functions, the chief use of a critic being that he should announce truths which others do not yet perceive. There are but two things that a critic *can* state—a truth and a fallacy. Each of these, however, has two subdivisions as to its popularity; a truth may be popular or not, and so may a fallacy. The popular truth being already sufficiently expressed, has no need of the critic's advocacy; fallacy of either kind he had better abstain from altogether, so there is nothing left for him but the statement of unpopular truth—rather an unpleasant and ill-requited duty, yet the chief duty which the art critic has to fulfil.

2. *To instruct the public in the theoretical knowledge of art.*—The work most needed is not as yet pure criticism, but art-teaching as preparatory to it. Art is a subject so deep and difficult, so infinitely subtle and complex, that it is only after the study of years that men even begin to comprehend it. But painting has also another characteristic peculiar to itself, and which places its teachers and practitioners in a position of singular delicacy. Other profound studies, as, for instance, chemistry or mathematics, are seen to be difficult by every one, and persons who have not studied them, never labour under the illusion that they know all about them. But painting seems so simple, the object which it proposes to itself is apparently so obvious, that every one secretly believes himself competent to judge of it. The really informed teacher has therefore first to persuade his less informed readers that painting is not a simple matter, but a very deep and subtle compound of several sciences with poetry; next, that they are themselves as yet more or less ignorant of painting; and thirdly, that he, the critic, knows enough of the subject to be a trustworthy teacher and guide. Now even if the critic can persuade his audience that painting is difficult of comprehension, he is accused of contempt for the public as soon as he implies his opinion that the public is generally ignorant of painting.* This is so far from being a just accusation, that some of the men whose genius we most revere, as for instance Byron, and Scott, and Wellington, knew nothing whatever of painting. Grown-up people, however, seldom like to be told that they

* An accusation often brought against Mr. Ruskin.

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are ignorant of anything, and indeed it is superfluous rudeness to tell people of their ignorance when they are already quite aware of it.

Men devoted to pure science, as for instance mathematicians, are spared this unpleasant necessity, because no one who has never learned mathematics ever dreams of setting himself up as a judge of merit in mathematicians. But when people are ignorant of Art, they are so usually to that degree that they are not even aware of their own ignorance. The most politic critic is, therefore, continually driven into the dilemma, either to hold his peace and so let error go uncontradicted, or else convince his pupil, by offensive demonstration, that he does not yet understand the subject. And when we consider that the writer on Art addresses himself neither to the obedience of infancy nor the humility of the poor, but to men and women of mature age, already highly refined, often deeply and variously learned in other matters, generally belonging to the upper ranks of life, often very rich, and therefore likely to be very proud, highly susceptible, impatient of instruction, almost incapable of imagining that they have anything yet to learn—the practical difficulty of such teaching is clear. And even if, after making hosts of enemies by his frankness, an art teacher should at last succeed in persuading his readers that they cannot know what they have never learned, the difficulty of proving his own competence yet remains. In art criticism the most instructed teacher is continually liable to err. Painting includes positive science, but it also includes much more. Of its noblest powers the feeling of some finely organized human being is the only criterion; of Turner's dream-power, or Raphael's refinement, the soul is the only judge. And here is a question of deep and inborn affinity: we are not organized alike, and genius affects us variously. My impressions will seem wrong to you if I state them quite honestly, and so would yours to me. A critic, therefore, who ever quits the plain ground of easily ascertainable fact to attempt the higher criticism of feeling is sure to awaken dissent. Rude and simple persons express this dissent with vehemence, and become personally hostile; intellectual men mark with curious interest the point of divergence, and calmly try to account for it. But both henceforth regard the critic as a fallible person, whose teaching is to be either rejected altogether or received with thoughtful caution.

It may be asked when this educating function of the art critic is to cease. It is like asking when schoolmasters are to cease. Every day thousands of new human beings come into the world whose future social position will require them to pretend to appreciate pictures. Is this pretension to be a hollow make-belief, degrading to manliness, destructive to honesty, and thus vitally injurious to character? or is it to be the simple assertion of a well-founded right to a real opinion? If the latter, the theoretical art teacher—the "critic," as he is yet called—has endless work before him. By means of books and articles in the reviews and newspapers, and, I think, still more by direct personal communication in the form of lectures, he will have to train the public in those eternal truths

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which are the beginning of criticism. He and his successors will have to repeat them over and over again so long as civilization shall endure.

3. *To defend true living artists against the malice of the ignorant.*—Every original painter, especially in landscape, has to pass through a period of contempt which it is in the power of any intelligent critic to shorten by demonstrating his fidelity to nature. This ought not to be an exceptional act of kindness on the critic's part; it is a simple duty which he is bound to perform whenever he sees the need of it. The most acute sufferings of men of genius are inflicted by the instinctive tendency of mankind to consider all originality a fair butt for ridicule. But little men are weak against a strong will, and one resolute voice will silence the silly laughter of whole multitudes.

A peculiar form of this duty is the defence of young artists whose powers are as yet imperfectly developed. It is certain that a young painter who sees and feels very intensely will try for too much, and spoil his pictures. The sort of injury to young men's work which comes of their good qualities ought, therefore, to be spoken of with the utmost indulgence, and even defended by the art critic. Of course he must state the defects frankly, but at the same time he is bound to enforce the truth, too often forgotten, that certain rare and noble qualities, like swans, are repulsive at first, and only become beautiful as they approach maturity.

4. *To prevent false living artists from acquiring an influence injurious to the general interests of art.*—Some good-natured people think it very wrong and unkind in a critic to point out the defects of living men, and so reduce their incomes; but as soon as a painter acquires any influence, his shortcomings ought to be clearly, though not discourteously, stated. For example: a certain famous painter, whose services as an illustrator of interesting buildings were, before the invention of photographic printing, of quite inestimable value, has for some years exhibited a peculiar kind of cleverly tinted drawings in oil, of which he is the inventor. But a critic who should fail to point out the difference between these and real pictures would not be doing his duty. There is no necessity, either in this or any other such case, to speak of the artist with unkindness, or to vex and irritate him by sarcasm. It is merely necessary to demonstrate that his works, though exhibited as pictures, and therefore supposed to be works in colour, are only tinted drawings executed in oil, with no attempt to render the variety of natural hues. After reading such a criticism, the spectator might still sufficiently admire these works on their own grounds, but he would be protected from an influence which might else have vitiated his sense of colour, and so incapacitated him for the enjoyment of colour in nature, and prevented him from rendering the honour which is due to genuine painters who really *do* work in colour.

5. *To exalt the fame of dead artists whose example may be beneficial.*—It may frequently happen that some dead artist, whose name is not on everybody's lips, has nevertheless done certain things in such a supremely excellent way that attention ought from time to time to be directed to his

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works with reference to their especial quality. It requires some effort to remember very many names, and so, out of pure indolence, the human race prefers to repeat incessantly half-a-dozen of the most famous, and ignore the rest absolutely. This is very convenient, for it enables us to gain credit for a knowledge of art without heavily burdening our memories, but it is neither instructive to the living nor just to the dead. There is no habit more degrading to the human intelligence than that of narrowing our powers of admiration to three or four sets of objects. We ought to admire all that is good, whoever did it, be he living or dead. True artists, thank God, have been and still are numerous, and from every true artist there is always something to be learned that no other can teach us so well.

6. *To weaken the fame of dead artists whose names have an injurious degree of authority.*—One of the most melancholy things in the world is the enormous power for evil of the dead over the living. There are dead foreigners who govern England in many ways with a tyranny that we should endure from no living one. Great artists who, when alive, were probably far too liberal and large-minded to conceive it desirable that anybody should slavishly imitate them, are erected, when dead, into colossal obstacles in the road to original achievement. There is scarcely a single famous painter whose name has not been misused as a means for the repression of genius. The way in which great men are admired by little ones is so utterly childish and irrational that they pervert even originality itself into an argument against originality. Instead of saying, "Raphael was original, and you ought to be so too," they say, "Raphael was original, therefore—you are to mimic him." They can conceive of no other sort of respect for genius than that which monkeys have for humanity.

There is, unfortunately, only one way of meeting this fallacy. It is useless to argue that when Raphael worked he had no idea of binding down all future painters to his particular manner. It is in vain to suggest that it would probably be rather unpleasant than not to a man of original genius to be copied for ever and ever by endless generations of mere imitators. It is idle to hope that persons devoid of originality can ever be brought so far to comprehend its nature as to perceive that the object of its intensest scorn is not another originality, which it always heartily respects, but precisely that slavish imitation by which people imagine that they are paying it an appropriate homage. So the only course left is to point out the failings of great men, and as every great man has plenty of them, there is much to be said in that way.

There is a vast critical movement in our age, the general object of which may be defined as the emancipation of the living intellect from the tyranny of the dead. Nothing whatever is safe from this movement. No sanctity of tradition will preserve the most revered writings from the severe scrutiny of this universal criticism. No dead historian will escape questioning as to the evidence for his events; no dead natural philosopher

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will pass conjecture for experiment, for the human race is advancing to ripe years, and no longer accepts as infallible the authorities that governed its infancy. Nor can famous artists, any more than famous writers and men of science, be henceforth the faultless gods they were. All their claims are to be sifted in a new and strange way, not by passionate partisans, but by calm clear heads that care for no man's name. Out of this ordeal many a white fame will come shrivelled, and frail, and black, like paper out of fire; but others will only be brightened by it afresh. And the benefit to the people will be, that they will no longer worship blindly, like savages, but admire intelligently like thinking men.

7. *To speak always with absolute sincerity.*—There is a certain kind of criticism, very knowing in tone, and light and jaunty in expression, which scarcely even pretends to a conviction of any kind whatever. Such criticism is almost invariably insincere. When men are quite in earnest they are never frivolous or flippant. Perhaps an insincere writer on art may often be rather shallow and careless than dishonest, and utter idle fallacies merely because nothing concerning art has acquired in his own mind the solidity and consistence of a truth. His main object is to produce telling remarks about pictures, and say as many smart things as he can find a pretext for. The criticisms in some of the French newspapers are perfect masterpieces of this kind of writing. They have nothing to do with art teaching, for you may read them from year to year without learning anything. They appear to be quite purposeless, and only leave a general impression on the reader's mind that the writer must be rather a sharp fellow. If these men were to say to themselves before writing, "I will say nothing but what I think, I will set down only my real opinions," they would be much embarrassed, because they don't think and have no opinions.

Happily, men have an instinct which protects them from the influence of the insincere. One writer with a set of real convictions, be they truths or mistakes, has more power in the world than a hundred without an opinion. The influence of insincere art critics can therefore only be considerable in regions where no earnest one is active. They feel this so instinctively that when a true man appears, they always immediately combine against him, being afraid of him, as well they may. Any particularly sincere and earnest painter is also sure to be the object of their untiring animosity; but they laud false artists with a brotherly good-will.

8. *To give open expression to vicissitudes of opinion, not fearing the imputation of inconsistency.*—This, though put separately on account of its importance, is of course comprised in the simple duty of sincerity. A man who always says what he thinks, and whose opinions modify themselves continually, cannot always say the same thing. The opinions of men who think are always growing and changing, like living children. All honest and thoughtful men know this, and the sort of consistency which is merely the repetition of a formula is not, in their view, a thing to be respected.

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Such consistency is often to be attributed to simple stolidity, and still oftener perhaps to a very cunning sort of dishonesty. A dishonest writer thinks, before he commits anything to print, "I must mind what I am about, and not say anything contrary to what I have said somewhere else;" so instead of publishing his opinions of to-day, in other words, his only sincere opinions, he dishonestly twists them to make them fit in with opinions expressed perhaps years ago, and thereby gets respected for his precious consistency. A stupid man, on the other hand, is consistent from sheer inertness. He arrived at a conclusion some time ago, and finds it too disturbing and troublesome to look into the grounds of it now, wherefore he also is held to be wise. But a writer who is both honest and intelligent is perpetually reviewing his own conclusions, and asking himself candidly where he may have been mistaken; and every time he feels convinced that he has been leading people wrong, he is simple enough to be in a hurry to tell them so, on which the people, who have a violent admiration for consistency, and a proportionate contempt for the want of it, utterly scorn and despise him as an unsafe and uncertain guide that doesn't know his own mind, and cannot tell whither he is going. And indeed in this last particular they are very right, for whosoever accepts Truth for his leader, and follows her faithfully, scarcely *can* tell whither she may lead him.

9. *To make himself as thoroughly informed as his time and opportunities will allow about everything concerning the fine arts, whether directly or indirectly.*—Art is so vast that it is scarcely conceivable how any man can become a very profound judge of it, without devoting his *whole* time to it. But I have inserted the phrase, "as his time and opportunities will allow," under the supposition that it might perhaps be possible for some writer of very extraordinary genius to acquire an extensive knowledge of art in the intervals of other and, to him, more important avocations. The only way to learn the rudiments of art criticism is to draw and paint the facts of nature, that is, to produce careful studies from nature, each with the especial object of recording faithfully some particular natural fact. Perhaps a thousand such studies might suffice for the acquisition of the elements of natural law. They ought to be executed in different materials, according to their especial purpose. But to become an accomplished art critic it is also essential to make studies of pictures and drawings by different masters, not in the way of copying complete works, but rather studying parts of them, always with a definite object. It is unnecessary to indicate the immense range of literary culture essential to the art critic. The success of historical painting is not to be estimated by persons ignorant of history, nor can illustrations of poets be intelligible to spectators who never read verse. And there is this peculiarity about the position of every art critic, that his knowledge must embrace the knowledge, not of one artist only, but of thousands.

Nor can people who stay at home become art critics. No one can judge authoritatively of the representation of a class of scenery with

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which he is not familiar. The range of our landscape painters is extensive. They illustrate every kind of scenery in Europe, and of late years they penetrate into Egypt and Asia. The critic must follow them everywhere, taking memoranda of natural facts. He must also travel to see pictures. The critic of literature may find in London all the books he needs; but the productions of painters are not so easily accessible. The colour of a picture *cannot* be reproduced. Hence nothing but the original handiwork of the painter himself is of the least use for reference. And to grasp the whole mind of a great artist we must see *all* his works, for every great artistic nature is so large that each picture is a new revelation of ranges of power before unknown to us.

10. *To enlarge his own powers of sympathy.*—How far this may be done by an effort of the will must depend on the nature of the man. But the elasticity and universality of his sympathy are amongst the noblest and rarest distinctions of the genuine critic. Painting is an expression of *human feeling.* Cold and unsympathetic temperaments, which are so often tempted to write criticism by the love of power, are therefore disqualified for it by their own constitution. A true critic feels *with* the artist, and is therefore strangely tolerant of the most opposite kinds of artistic expression; an unfeeling nature prides itself on remaining unmoved, and actually esteems its own callousness a sort of superiority. An artist may be all the better for not being self-conscious, but a critic needs a highly sensitive self-consciousness to deliver him from that slavery to its own narrow personality which enthralls every simple mind.

11. *To resist the formation of prejudices.*—The Fine Arts naturally breed prejudice. Almost every painter is perfectly convinced that some process or colour is abominable, merely because he is not master of it, or that some natural object or effect is unsuitable for artistic purposes, because he himself has no feeling for it. One painter tried to persuade me that cobalt is incompatible with harmony, and that it ought to be rejected from the colour-box, and every colour has some bitter and inveterate enemy amongst artists. There is hardly a painter who has not some crotchet which the experience of many others proves to be quite groundless, and the more we know of Art the less we feel disposed to pin our faith to the dicta of any single theorist or practitioner.

The explanation of this with regard to painters is, that their personal experience, being intensely narrow and practical, naturally gives rise to strong convictions, which they have seldom enough of self-consciousness to attribute to their simple personal cause, and which they therefore express as if they were absolute, and not merely relative truths. Instead of saying, for instance, "I don't enjoy green," a painter will very likely tell you that "green is incompatible with fine colour." Sometimes this takes the form of a violent animosity against some unoffending tree or plant. Englishmen often have a prejudice against poplars, and I met a Frenchman once who railed at chestnut-trees with an incredible acerbity.

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Prejudices of this kind, however foolish and unfounded, are not of much consequence in painters, because if they have an antipathy to a certain colour or tree, they only avoid it. But one or two such prejudices might vitiate the judgment of a critic, so as to make him unjust to whole classes of artists.

The artifices of pseudo art criticism are so transparent that it seems hardly worth while to indicate them; still, as they appear to impose upon some people even yet, they have a claim upon our attention.

To be a true art critic it is necessary, first, to be in possession of an enormous amount of information about Art and Nature such as very few persons have either time or industry to acquire. Of course we presuppose a natural talent or disposition for criticism, but that, without the information, only makes people talk; and when people talk about matters which they do not understand, they generally talk nonsense.

The pseudo art critic is a person who writes what is called criticism without being in possession of the preliminary information which is indispensable to the production of true criticism. His chief anxiety is to hide this deficiency from his readers, and to leave the impression on their minds that he knows all about the Fine Arts. This is easy or difficult in exact proportion to the cultivation of his audience.

A genuine art critic often confesses ignorance of particular truths; as, for instance, in criticizing a naked figure, if he does not understand anatomy he will probably tell you so with perfect frankness; or if he has not witnessed a storm at sea, yet has to criticize a shipwreck, he will begin by telling you that his opinion on the subject is not of much value, but that the remarks he ventures to offer may be taken for what they are worth. A pseudo critic *never* does this,* and whenever a critic pretends to know everything, it is the surest sign that he knows nothing, that he has not even an idea of what it is to know anything thoroughly. The pretence to universality in art criticism is sure to be hollow, because human life is not long enough for a man to become a universal art critic, if he studied for it ten hours a day, and never did anything else.

The immediate object of a pseudo critic is to discover defects; that of a true one, to arrive at opinions. The false critic cannot, however, afford to point out the defects of painters already canonized, because, by so doing, he would oppose the popular opinion, which he always takes care to conciliate. There is this peculiarity about painting, that it is impossible to produce an absolutely true picture, because some truths must always be sacrificed to others. If, in a landscape, the relation of one shadow to its light is truly given, the rest of the picture must be either false or out of harmony with that shadow. Again, colour has to be sacrificed to light, and form to colour. A painter has always to purchase truths with falsities, as men buy bread with money; and this necessity being not in the least

* That is, up to the date of the present publication. When they have read this article they will invent a new set of dodges, amongst which—who knows?—even modesty may find a place.

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understood by the public generally, offers to the pseudo critic infinite opportunities for the exercise of his little art or trick of petty fault-finding. And not only that, but the extreme difficulty of painting exposes all painters, even the greatest, to genuine errors, which a noble critic notices only when absolutely necessary, but which the base one fastens upon instinctively, whenever he dare, to the neglect of everything else; so that the whole tissue of his criticism, like the talk of an ill-tempered woman, is tiresome and interminable fault-finding.

Then there is the safe old well-known critical trick of blaming a thing for not being something else. The aims of our English painters are, to their honour, so large and various that endless opportunities occur for the exercise of this ancient artifice. The wonder is, that there should exist people so simple as to be imposed upon by it, yet it still apparently answers, like many other cunning contrivances of our ancestors, which modern ingenuity strives vainly to supersede. Thus, if I want to leave an impression that John Lewis and John Brett are not what they should be, I have only to suggest that Reynolds and Gainsborough did not paint in that manner, which, of course, is undeniable.

But an invention which modern times may fairly claim is, the art of hinting that you could say a good deal against a picture if you felt inclined, but that the faults you vaguely allude to are too obvious to require specification. This has great effect on people not very conversant with Art. Another form of it is to allude to classes of Art, whose merit and value you cannot quite safely deny, as if they were so very familiar as to have become stale and tiresome. There exists amongst artists a complete vocabulary of slang, the great convenience of which is that it enables you to talk knowingly about your superiors, and, without committing yourself to the expression of a single real opinion, affect to estimate lightly all that they have accomplished.

The one distinguishing quality of all valuable art criticism is *largeness*—largeness of acquired information, to grasp the knowledge of so many thousands of artists, and largeness of natural sympathy, to enter into the individual feelings and affections of so great a multitude of minds. For to criticize adequately any artist's work, mere talent and honesty, though needful, are not enough. It is necessary to have learned what he has learned, and felt what he has felt.

P. G. H.

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Richelieu's Shabby Suit.

The researches of M. Morny Lafon have recently brought to light the particulars of a *cause célèbre* which was the talk of all Paris in the earlier days of Louis XVI., but which is not, that we are aware, familiar to many English readers. The principal person engaged in it was the Duke of Richelieu, Marshal of France, celebrated in so many novels and plays as the *beau idéal* of a courtly libertine; and it shows what sort of institution the once famous Parliament of Paris had become, when, after its dissolution in 1771, the Minister Maurepas recalled it into existence, in the vain hope of acquiring popularity. The book in which all the minutiæ of the case described by M. Lafon are stated at length, and which is entitled *Le Maréchal de Richelieu et Madame de Saint Vincent*, is well worthy of an attentive perusal, because it brings forward many persons whose characters illustrate the period immediately preceding the first French Revolution. Here we have confined ourselves to the main facts, deeming these sufficient to constitute a tolerably good story, and to furnish a picture of a state of manners to which nothing corresponds at the present day.

The heroine of the tale is a lady of ancient Provençal lineage, whose family name was Vence-Villeneuve, and who very early in life became the wife of the Marquis Fauris de Saint Vincent, President of the Parliament of Aix. So lightly did she regard her matrimonial obligations, that at a period by no means remarkable for moral austerity, the members of her family, including her father and her husband, held a meeting, and applied to the Government as to the best means of providing for so discreditable a connection. The result of the application was a Royal order to the effect that Julie, Countess of Vence-Villeneuve, wife of the President, should be conducted to a Benedictine convent situated at Millau in Languedoc. This event occurred in the year 1753.

Shortly after or before her marriage, the Duke of Richelieu, who was governor of the provinces of Guyenne and Gascony, had paid a visit to M. de Vence, father of the fair Julie. The young girl made a slight impression upon the duke, and the duke was too long remembered by the young girl. There was not much to do in the convent, and Madame de Vincent, proud of her acquaintance with the great man, amused her companions by talking of the memorable visit to Aix. She soon had the further gratification of bestowing a little patronage. One of the nuns requested she would exert her influence in favour of her brother, and a letter was accordingly despatched to Bordeaux, where the governor resided. The chances were, that the old duke, who had passed ten good years in folly

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and dissipation since he had seen his little friend, had forgotten all about her. Such, however, was unfortunately not the case. Richelieu not only answered the letter, but immediately granted the favour requested. Nay, the old scapegrace was so pleased at being reminded of one of the few innocent acts in the course of his sinful life, that he wrote to Madame de Saint Vincent, about once a week, in a semi-gallant sort of style, expressing his regret that he could not call upon her, and delicately warning her not to ask more favours for her friends than he could possibly grant.

The warning was not needed. Madame de Saint Vincent had soon given up all thoughts of her friends, and was only thinking how she might benefit herself. She had greatly exceeded her allowance, was deeply in debt, and found creditors intrusive. A modest epistle, hinting at the shortness of her supplies, was written to the duke; and, strange to say—for Richelieu was the stingiest of libertines—was honoured with a favourable reply, namely, an order for 3,000 livres.

By divers articles of *virtù*, illuminated missals, and what not, we are constantly reminded that the seclusion of convents has sometimes proved favourable to the cultivation of the imitative arts. Possessed of Richelieu's letters, a desire of becoming a proficient in imitative art took possession of Madame de Saint Vincent. Placing a letter against the window of her holy retreat, she would cover it with a blank sheet of paper, and ingeniously copy one word after another, till she had produced documents which, to all appearance, were in the hand-writing of Richelieu, but the contents of which were entirely dictated by the exigencies of Madame de Saint Vincent. Among other works of art thus created was a copy of the order for 3,000 livres, which was greatly improved upon the original by the addition of a cipher. Madame de Saint Vincent was no servile copyist; while she carefully studied her model, she threw in beauties emphatically her own.

Unlike many great artists, this ingenious lady had carefully consulted the tastes of the peculiar spectators to whom her works were exhibited; and never was the civilizing, mollifying effect of art more plainly shown than in her case. Those rapacious vultures, the creditors of Millau, had no sooner set their eyes on the fabricated order for 30,000 livres, with the duke's signature in the corner, than their rapacity vanished at once, and where they had intended contumely they lavished respect.

Madame de Saint Vincent, however, was not so totally absorbed in the pursuit of art as to neglect the performance of a virtuous action. She had taken notice of one M. Védel du Montel, major of the Dauphin's regiment, who had visited one of her fellow-residents, Mademoiselle Maury de Saint Victor, in the character of an accepted lover. Knowing—for she knew a great deal—something of the antecedents of this gentleman, she assured her young friend that the qualities of the major were not of a kind likely to ensure domestic happiness; and thus occasioned a series of inquiries, which resulted in a dissolution of the engagement. Her conduct on

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this occasion is rendered the more admirable by the circumstance that Mademoiselle de Saint Victor, who had once been her most intimate friend, had gradually become unaccountably cool and distant. The cause of the change she did not know, but *we* do. Mademoiselle de Saint Victor had observed, unseen, the labours of Madame de Saint Vincent in her studio; and it is the peculiarity of the line of art to which the latter had devoted herself, that the works belonging to it are only admired by those who have not seen them executed.

All of a sudden Madame de Saint Vincent grew heartily sick of the Benedictine convent, and, by repeated epistles, bored her father and her husband to such an extent that, merely for the sake of peace and quietness, they allowed her to take up her residence among the Ursulines of Tarbes. However, before she could quit Millau she had to satisfy other persons besides the heads of her family. These were her creditors, who, much as they had been gratified by the inspection of the order for 30,000 livres, had as yet touched nothing, and had no notion of allowing her to slip through their fingers. What was to be done?

The lovely recluse bethought herself of one M. des Angles, who held a place under the duke, and who was the person for whom, at the request of his sister, she had in the first instance asked a favour. Gratitude, she thought, would secure his devotion; and summoning him to Millau, she laid before him the state of her affairs, hoping that he would aid her in obtaining the assistance of the duke, and talking about a legacy of 10,000 livres which had been bequeathed to her by her mother, and with which she intended to pay her debts. M. des Angles was not only satisfied, but delighted; and when, a month afterwards, Madame de Saint Vincent showed him a letter from Richelieu, in which the story of the legacy was confirmed, and the duke promised that he would see everything set right, M. des Angles called in all the bills of his lovely confidant, and made himself responsible for their aggregate amount—viz. 5,525 livres—convinced that Richelieu was his guarantee.

M. des Angles must have been one of those men by no means rare in the world, who, when once they take a fancy to a thing, will easily rush into a scrape with their eyes wide open. Just when his last conversation with Madame de Saint Vincent had reached its most interesting point, and he was taking the burden of her debts on his own obliging shoulders, in walked Mademoiselle de Saint Victor, and, unobserved by the marchioness, began shaking her head at him with all her might and main. M. des Angles did not pause in his operations, but he noticed the signal, and Madame de Saint Vincent having retired, he took the opportunity of asking Mademoiselle de Saint Victor what she meant by her kindly solicitude. The young lady's explanation was clear enough. She roundly declared that the legacy bequeathed by the marchioness's mother had no existence, save in the imagination of the marchioness, and that her significant shakes of the head were intended to prevent M. des Angles from making a fool of himself.

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Prompt as he had been with his confidence, M des Angles was furious when he found he had been duped, and his next journey to the convent was enlivened by schemes of vengeance, when whom should he meet on the road but the Baron de la Capelle Montamiral, a friend of Madame de Saint Vincent's, who had been employed by her to exhibit the order for 30,000 livres, and who, convinced himself, had had no difficulty in silencing the creditors. The worthy baron talked so very satisfactorily about this order, that when M. des Angles had reached Madame de Saint Vincent, he not only forbore from referring to the subject of Mademoiselle de Saint Victor's communication, but he actually advanced 1,747 livres more, without any security beyond a mere written acknowledgment.

All obstacles surmounted, Madame de Saint Vincent was removed to Tarbes, but no sooner did she reach the convent than she found it absolutely detestable, and so loud were her complaints at being "buried alive," that the poor Ursulines were frightened, while the heart of the bishop was so greatly moved that he transferred her from the convent to a cheerful house commanding a most lovely prospect. Tarbes was considered one of the most beautiful spots in the neighbourhood of the Pyrenees, but what was that to Madame de Saint Vincent? She could not bear it.

The trouble which she had taken to remove from Millau to Tarbes was equalled by the pains she took to quit the place of her own choice. The fact was, the Dauphin's regiment, of which M. Védel was major, was garrisoned at Poitiers, and Madame de Saint Vincent had no notion of any earthly happiness that was not more or less associated with proximity to M. Védel. Although nearly fifty years of age, the major was regarded as one of the handsomest men of his day. He had regular features, piercing black eyes, irreproachable teeth, a smile that bordered on the womanish, and he admirably became his uniform. It will now be surmised that Madame de Saint Vincent's solicitude respecting the domestic happiness of Mademoiselle de Saint Victor was not altogether disinterested.

Off went a letter to her old friend the duke, who was not a little moved by his dear friend's description of her wretched situation. In an affectionate reply, which he wrote from Versailles, he called her a "poor little victim," but still he saw a difficulty in her position. If the Ursuline convent was no better than a dungeon, she had, at any rate, gone thither of her own accord, and though she hinted at a long list of convents, to which she would gladly be removed, it was plain enough she knew nothing about them. The duke promised, however, that he would write to the Bishop of Tarbes; and what was very strange, he actually did write, for to break every promise made to a woman might be regarded as one of the leading principles of his life. The fact that the conduct of the old libertine was tolerably correct throughout the whole of the strange affair, gives an especially ridiculous character to this complicated tragic-comedy.

The bishop's answer to the duke was fretful, but promising. He said

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truly enough, that Madame de Saint Vincent had changed Millau for Tarbes much against the will of her relatives, and much to his own annoyance also, for he did not care to have in one of his establishments "an unfortunate woman, with whom he had not the honour to be acquainted, and who, innocent or guilty, had been cast off by her relatives." He had only received her with the intention of obliging the duke, and do what he would she was not to be pleased. She not only disliked the convent, but she hated the city of Tarbes, and the surrounding country into the bargain. He had even asked her to look upon his house as her own, but even that would not content her. She was *bonne* and she was *sage*, but unfortunately she was not of the same mind for two consecutive hours, and with ladies of this sort it is hard to deal. As for the duke's insinuations, that he had sought to confine Madame de Saint Vincent with undue severity, they were wholly unmerited. She was at liberty to walk in and out of the convent at her own good pleasure, and if she did not choose to enter it at all, no one would thwart her inclination. Good and wise as she was, her expensive habits set a bad example to the house ; and, all things considered, she was not more anxious to leave Tarbes than was the bishop to get rid of her.

When it was manifest that all parties, however different their sentiments, had exactly the same object in view, the desired removal was effected. By virtue of an order of the Government, which was dated 30th April, 1771, and assigned the convent of the Catherinettes, at Poitiers, as the fickle marchioness's place of residence, she left Tarbes on the 10th of the following month ; and, as the bishop stated in a subsequent letter, she was very happy, while he was not at all displeased. On her road she stopped at Bordeaux, during the absence of the duke, and lodged at a convent.

When she arrived at Poitiers she found the convent of the Catherinettes as delightful as that of the Ursulines had been detestable. And certainly the duke had done his best to make things comfortable, and had caused her apartments to be elegantly furnished at his own expense. After seventeen years of seclusion, being thus provided with a charming residence in the immediate neighbourhood of M. Védel, the marchioness might now resolve to be happy.

Considering what pains Madame de Saint Vincent had taken to go to Poitiers, we can hardly believe that her first meeting with Major Védel was the result of an accident, though there is evidence in favour of that hypothesis. At all events the accident was soon improved, and the major and the marchioness were in the habit of meeting at the house of a third party, the Count de la Messalière.

The documents illustrating this period of the history form a long series of letters, treating of lovers' quarrels, jealousies and reconciliations, and proving plainly enough that the marchioness was passionately attached to the major, but less clearly that the major was passionately attached to the marchioness. In the style of her letters Madame de Saint Vincent is

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decidedly inferior to her grandmother, who was no other than the celebrated Madame de Sévigné.

During this happy time Richelieu came to Poitiers and announced his arrival by a little billet, remarkable for the badness of the spelling, when we bear in mind that Louis François Armand du Plessis, Duke of Richelieu, was not only a Peer and Marshal of France, a chevalier of the King's Orders, first gentleman of his Majesty's chamber, Governor of the provinces of Guyenne and Gascony, but also a member of the French Academy. Twice in one day did the duke visit his little friend. The first visit was in conformity with the strictest etiquette, Richelieu being accompanied by the bishop of the diocese, with whom he had dined. The second visit was late in the evening, when he came alone—a circumstance that caused much talk in the neighbourhood.

As time progressed the intimacy of Védel and the marchioness rather increased than diminished. The major obtained permission to visit the convent whenever he pleased, and to remain there till eight o'clock in the evening, and thus the fond pair saw each other every day. But the happiness of Madame de Saint Vincent was suddenly cut short, in the spring of 1773, by the intelligence that Védel had set off for Paris without having warned her by a single word on the subject. A passionate letter followed him, concluding with the business-like information that in the month of November the marchioness expected to receive 255,000 livres from one M. Peixoto of Bordeaux.

Letters, however, were not enough. Where Védel was, Madame de Saint Vincent must be likewise. Through the influence of the duke she obtained the right of moving to Paris, and to Paris she went.

When she arrived there, she was miserable enough. By way of contrast to her smart suite of apartments at Poitiers, she had a wretched room on the third floor of the convent of the Filles de la Miséricorde, which was situated in the Rue du Vieux Colombier (near Saint Sulpice), and so grievously was she in want of ready cash, that she was forced to sell not only her own clothes, but also her maid's. As for her quondam patron the Marshal-Duke, he had returned to his old habits of strict economy, and answered a very pressing demand for assistance with a gift of six louis. Indeed it seems certain that she would have died of starvation in a month, had it not been for the beneficence of the Countess de Saint Jean, a lady of very equivocal reputation, but a kind friend upon this occasion.

While money was wanting, Védel was hard to find; but a small remittance of 600 livres, sent to Madame Saint Vincent by her procureur at Aix, besides cheering her spirits, brought the disinterested adorer once more to her feet. Marchionesses, after all, are not to be picked up every day, and Védel contrived to make all the tradesmen of the Faubourg Saint Germain familiar with the title of his innamorata, rightly perceiving that by diffusion of this useful knowledge he would at the same time attain an extension of credit.

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But the more ordinary methods of swindling were not enough to satisfy the ambitious minds of the marchioness and her friends. We have seen how she devoted herself to a certain branch of art at Millau, and we may add, that she had formed certain vast projects at Poitiers, and longed for zealous agents to put them into execution. She now bethought herself of the Abbé Villeneuve Flayosc, son of her sister, and implored him to pay her a visit; and the abbé, like a dutiful nephew, obeyed the summons of his aunt, and to her great satisfaction introduced Jean Baptiste Bénaven, a gentleman of Agde in Languedoc, well adapted for intrigues of every kind, from affairs of gallantry to the most delicate pecuniary transactions. Of course, as in duty bound, he fell in love with Madame de Saint Vincent, nor did his addresses light on an unwilling ear.

We are not prepared to say that Védel was, like Othello, "not easily jealous," but certain it is, that, like all men of commanding intellect, he could keep every passion under control when he had some great end to pursue. Thus, perceiving that the Sieur Bénaven was likely to prove a useful connection, he smothered all the jealous pains he felt on his account, but his great soul boiled with fury when he detected a flirtation between Madame de Saint Vincent and the chaplain of the convent, from whose acquaintance no profit whatever, as he thought, could be derived. On the other hand, he did not make the slightest objection to a renewal of acquaintance with the Duke of Richelieu, who once more became intimate with the "little victim," thanks to the attractions of a young English lady whom the marchioness had attached to her person. Visits were paid and returned, Madame de Saint Vincent was constantly seen going, alone or with her young English friend, to the duke's hotel in the Rue Neuve Saint Augustin, and as constantly were servants in the duke's livery seen carrying billets to the Rue du Vieux Colombier. That the duke and Madame de Saint Vincent were on excellent terms with each other, was sufficiently obvious to all Paris.

While things were in this state the marchioness paid a visit to her dear friend and benefactress, the Countess de St. Jean, to whom she stated that she expected all sorts of prosperity from her intimacy with her illustrious friend. She supported her assertion by showing a sort of bill drawn by Richelieu upon Peixoto, the banker of Bordeaux, and accepted by the latter. In this document the duke ordered the banker to pay Madame de Saint Vincent 100,000 crowns, which were lawfully due to her, and promised to hold himself responsible for that amount.

We have said a "sort of bill," because the document was so exceedingly irregular in its form that the Countess de St. Jean did not like the look of it. Madame de Saint Vincent explained that the form had been agreed upon between herself and the duke, who did not wish the bill to be negotiated; but she nevertheless took it away, and by the hands of her maid sent another in its place, requesting the countess to raise 24,000 livres.

The second document was even more unlucky than the first. The Brigadier Dumas, a devoted slave to the Countess de St. Jean, took it, at

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her request, to his banker's, but nearly swooned with affright when the man of business duly informed him that the signature of Peixoto was a forgery. Thus the bill found its way back to its original owner, and was taken by Védel to his lawyer, the Seigneur d'Estillac, whom he consulted as to its validity. Concluding that the questions of Védel related to the form of the document, D'Estillac said that bills payable to the bearer would be preferable. It seems that in the paper, as it stood, there was nothing to indicate that the right of Madame de Saint Vincent was transferable.

A proper bill of exchange then was required, and to get one Védel did *not* go to the Duke of Richelieu. Chance brought him into contact with an ex-judge, named Alléon des Gouttes, whom he invited to dinner. Madame de Saint Vincent was present at the meal, and when it was over, handed the learned man an unsigned document, asking if that was the proper form of a bill of exchange. The ex-judge replied in the negative, and then was asked if he himself would kindly furnish the lady with the form required? An odd question! What in the world should a lady of quality want to do with the form of a bill of exchange payable to the bearer? But the doubts that arose in the mind of the ex-judge were speedily resolved. A certain Marquis de Vieux-Bois had wished to present Madame de Saint Vincent with a sum of 20,000 livres in this fashion, on condition that she would not part with it till the end of a year. Without this condition the generous marquis feared she might spend all at once.

This explanation was, of course, perfectly satisfactory. The ex-judge gave the required form, and before a week had passed Madame de Saint Vincent was in possession of bills of exchange to the amount of 420,000 livres, signed, not by the Marquis de Vieux-Bois, but by the Duke of Richelieu. The next step was to bring all this valuable paper into circulation.

The young chaplain, who had excited the jealous wrath of Védel, and whose name was Froment, did not prove to be so worthless as his rival thought him. Before any of the other friends of Madame de Saint Vincent he was in the field with a bill for 60,000 livres; which, through the mediation of Maître Jacques Gaspereau, a notary of the Châtelet, he lodged with M. Bouché de Préville, *caissier-général* of the Government powder and saltpetre. Next came the other worthy young churchman, Madame's nephew, the Abbé Villeneuve Flayosc, who, armed with a recommendation from the Marquis of Quincy, called on Thomas Florès, a well-known discount-broker, and requested him to find some one who would lend money on a couple of bills, one for 20,000, the other for 25,000 livres, signed by a gentleman of the highest distinction. Who was the actual owner of the bills he refused to state; and Florès, perceiving that there was more mystery about the affair than he liked, refused to have anything to do with it.

Védel and Bénaven, the men of superior genius, were now called into action, and applied both together to a dealer in old clothes, who resided

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under the columns of the Halles, and boldly offered him two bills bearing the signature of Richelieu. Ruby, as the man was called, though his real name was Robit, said that such articles were out of his line of business; but he changed his tone when he learned that furniture would be taken instead of money, for he had a large stock on hand. At all events, there was no harm in looking at the bills; and to render assurance doubly sure, both the disguised gentlemen put their names to a certificate in which they bore witness to their authenticity.

Ruby was not yet satisfied; he had never seen the duke's signature, and the two gentlemen were utter strangers. Hence some better authority was desirable. The undaunted pair at once took the sceptic to Maître Louis Nicolas Dumoulin, King's counseller, and, moreover, Richelieu's notary, who had never beheld either of them in his life. Dumoulin was of opinion that the bills had really been signed by the duke, although the down strokes were finer than was usually the case in his writing, and, for further certainty, referred them to Richelieu's intendant. Ruby, however, had inquired enough, and gave for the bills, which together represented 55,000 livres, a quantity of clothes and furniture, valued at a ridiculously high figure, and only 6,000 livres in hard cash. Another useful person was the widow Leroy, a Norman dame, whose deceased husband, an army clothier, had once made uniforms for Védel's regiment. She was intrusted by her former patron with the office of negotiating two bills, amounting together to 90,000 livres. One of these, which was payable eighteen months after date, could not be got rid of at any price. The other, which was for 50,000 livres, went for half its nominal value. At last bills bearing the name of Richelieu began to be—offensive in the market. They were bandied about from hand to hand, till they found themselves in strange places, one being actually discovered in a low wine-shop. The person who seems to have derived the least profit from them was Madame de Saint Vincent herself, who was preyed on by her allies. The proceeds of the first bill, which had been so luckily negotiated by the Abbé Froment, went either into his own pocket, or into that of M. de Védel; and Bénaven, it appears, appropriated to himself the ready cash obtained from Ruby.

The depreciation of ducal paper in the market had not been unobserved by the acute dealer in old clothes, who had considered the transaction somewhat doubtful from the first, but had allowed his prudence to be overcome by his cupidity. That an explosion was at hand was clear enough to Ruby; and that he might be early in the field he sent his avocat, the Sieur Guinot, to Richelieu's hotel. The great man was at Bordeaux; but Marion, his intendant, was visible, and admitted that the signature to the bills was genuine, though he said that he knew nothing about them. Similar inquiries were made by other persons, and, at last, Marion wrote to the duke for precise information on the subject.

Nothing could be less equivocal than the duke's reply. He said that all who presented the bills in question must belong to a gang of knaves,

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who ought to be locked up without delay, and that he was soon coming to trounce them handsomely.

Now Marion was not only Richelieu's intendant, but he was greffier to the Châtelet, and having received his cue, he determined to carry on the war with vigour. Obtaining an order from M. de Sartine, Minister of Police, he at once arrested Ruby and Guinot, whom he considered both rogues alike, and clapped them in the Fort l' Evêque. Ruby gave up the name of Madame de Saint Vincent as the real issuer of the bills, and informed of this circumstance by his intendant, Richelieu wrote to his fair friend without delay. He had been greatly surprised to find that bills to the amount of 200,000 livres, signed by him, but of which he knew nothing, were in circulation, and still more astonished to find Madame de Saint Vincent named in connection with them. Of course she could do no less than aid him in exposing the rascality.

Madame de Saint Vincent rightly saw that here was a case in which timidity would not do. She must brazen the affair out, or fall. In her reply to the duke she expressed herself highly astonished and disgusted at the conduct of Marion, who had dared to accuse her of issuing forged bills bearing the name of Richelieu. Of course, Richelieu would do her justice, and if he would not, all her family would. She admitted her fault in parting with bills which Richelieu had given her, but necessity must plead her excuse.

The allied sharpers had indeed only one line of policy to adopt. It was too late to deny the issue of the bills, every nerve therefore must be strained to prove that the signatures were genuine, and that the duke was villanously attempting to evade a lawful responsibility. Either Madame de Saint Vincent was a forger, or Richelieu was a scoundrel, and the latter of these propositions was more to the taste of Védel and Co. than the former. Aware that the police were already charged with the investigation of the affair, they resolved to anticipate them, and accordingly the marchioness herself, accompanied by Védel, Bénaven, and another friend, called on the Police Minister, M. de Sartine, and produced documents and letters signed by Richelieu. M. de Sartine appeared most grateful for the light thus unexpectedly afforded him, and requested Bénaven to reduce the alleged facts into the form of a memorial and to bring it on the following day. Nothing could be more promising; the memorial was of course drawn up by Bénaven and taken to M. de Sartine, whose conduct was even more courteous than before.

The amiable Minister promised his kind instructors that they should soon hear from him; and so they did, for a day or two afterwards Madame de Saint Vincent, Védel, and Bénaven were all three conducted to the Bastille on a charge of forgery, and Marion, who had been armed with full powers by his master, commenced the prosecution. Madame de Saint Vincent had, however, sufficient interest to obtain permission to quit the Bastille, and remain at her convent under the surveillance of the police, and a similar favour was accorded to M. Védel. Bénaven was not equally

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lucky. Papers were found upon him which showed that he had maintained a criminal correspondence with certain French refugees in England, and he was transferred to the Fort l'Evêque as a person not fitted for the enjoyment of liberty.

The information commenced on the 8th August, 1774, before the Chevalier Bachois de Villefort, who in about a week saw sufficient reason to order the arrest of all the persons implicated in the negotiation of the bills. A packet of letters from Madame de St. Vincent to Védel, found by the police in a press at the house of the widow Leroy, furnished most formidable evidence against the accused.

On the 17th August the prisoners were heard for the first time. Madame de Saint Vincent owned to thirty-eight years of age, which was under the mark, and told a plausible story, from which it appeared that she had had bills from the duke to the amount of 1,020,000 livres. The sum looked large, and the judge asked what value M. de Richelieu could possibly have received as an equivalent. But the lady laughed aloud, and replied, "A value with which M. le Maréchal was satisfied." Notwithstanding this satisfactory explanation, the case was evidently about to terminate in favour of the duke, when, on the appeal of the marchioness, it was referred to the assembled chambers of the Parliament of Paris, on the 7th March, 1775, and the persons who had been arrested were, with one exception, removed from the various prisons in which they had been confined, and taken to the more respectable Conciergerie. The one exception was poor Bénaven, who was obliged to remain at the Fort l'Evêque.

The battle now had to be fought anew, on an entirely new field, particularly unfavourable to Richelieu. He had been one of the chief agents in the *coup d'état* by which the Parliament had been dissolved under Louis XV., and now it had been restored by Louis XVI. it was not likely to regard him with favour, especially when the person prosecuted was herself a "Présidente"—being the wife of the President of Aix, and therefore naturally allied to men of the robe. Many of the Peers, who had envied Richelieu during a long period of uninterrupted prosperity, embraced the opportunity of humiliating him with something like a malicious triumph. The Duke of Orleans was his avowed enemy; in Louis XV. he had lost his best friend. To all this it must be added that the cause had been the leading topic of conversation both at court and in the town, and that the democratic spirit which was destined so soon to break out with fearful violence, readily displayed itself, regarding with a mocking air the troubles of one of the old noblesse.

A whole literature of pamphlets, accusations, and replies marked the progress of this singular cause, and many a hungry wit gained a temporary livelihood by making appeals, that were sure to meet the public eye, in favour of the victims of persecution. Ruby could rely on the democratic sentiment. His name and condition had not the advantage of attracting public attention like those of the principal actors in the drama, but still

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his occupation was useful, his name was pure. Marshal de Richelieu might call him an "obscur fripier"—an obscure old clothesman. What of that? He would have only gloried in the virtuous obscurity of his peaceful trade, if the honourable darkness could have shielded him from the stormy persecution of a great lord. Bénaven, shut up in the Fort l'Evêque, deemed it more expedient to arouse the feelings proper to humanity in general, by expatiating on those particular sufferings from which the happier prisoners in the Conciergerie were free. For twelve days and thirteen nights, he said, he had served as food (*pâture*) to legions of monstrous rats. For four days and five nights he had struggled against these ignoble foes, without so much as a quarter of an hour's rest, until tired nature insisted on repose. Scarcely, however, had he closed his eyes, than he was awakened by a sharp pain. One of the frightful "insects" (so Bénaven classified rats) tore away a piece of his thigh, another fixed its teeth in his hand, and was not to be removed by any amount of shaking. At last, Bénaven had the ingenuity to strike it sharply with the other hand, and it fell. If the Jew and the adventurer could endeavour to awaken the sympathies of the multitude, Madame de Saint Vincent had a powerful aristocratic support of a very peculiar kind. All the great families of Provence, headed by the Viscount of Castellane, were animated by what in England is called a strong county feeling, and a pompous document, bristling with names mighty in the south, expressed a resolution to defend the persecuted Provençale to the last.

But the deepest impression was made by the written defence of Védel, which abounded with clap-trap worthy of a transpontine melo-drama. A paragraph will give a notion of the style in which the veteran soldier, the man of honour *par excellence*, expresses his grief at his wretched situation:—

"O thou, who guided my first footsteps in the career of honour; thou, whom a premature death snatched from my first youth, of which thou wert at once the pride and the support; true soldier, estimable citizen, father! couldst thou think that the child, who once was borne in thine arms on the field of battle—the child whom thou hast nourished by thy virtues, the child—last of a name dear to thy country—would consume the most precious portion of his life in replying to defamatory libels, in defending himself against judicial atrocities, after having fought thirty-four years for his prince, after thirty-four years of pure and irreproachable conduct, after having merited by his services the same position to which thou wert elevated by thine? Pardon—pardon. Thy son is unfortunate, but he is not guilty. Thou wert snatched from him too soon, but he has not destroyed thy work. Worthy and generous father, venerable ancestors, who perished sword-in-hand for the defence of the nation, arise—quit your tombs—bear witness to my integrity, and I shall see calumny clasp her dagger and fly shuddering from a citizen, whom she would never have dared to sully with her looks, if credit and intrigue had not taken up arms against him."

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The answers of Richelieu to the outbursts of clap-trap and rodomontade that assail him on all sides, are generally dignified and straightforward. With three lines he can demolish the edifice of humbug raised by Védel in the passage just cited. "The military services which the Sieur Védel dates from the time of his father," he says, "have nothing to do with the affair. Madame de Saint Vincent has been able to forget the virtuous examples bequeathed to her by a long line of illustrious ancestors, so it is not surprising that those which the Sieur Védel received from his father have made upon him but a faint impression."

The worst point in the duke's case was this: he might deny his signature as much as he pleased, but he had not a single witness who could prove by whom the forgery had been committed. At last such a witness was found in the person of Mademoiselle Maury de Saint Victor, who had been the intimate friend of Madame de Saint Vincent at the convent of Millau, and who, summoned to Paris, deposed, much against her will, that she had very often seen the marchioness imitate the duke's signature. Mademoiselle de Saint Victor had not been greatly esteemed at the convent, for she had been conspicuous as an *esprit fort*, though the fact that she was in frequent correspondence with Jean-Jacques Rousseau did not transpire till long afterwards. She appears to have been a girl of noble character, the only immaculate figure in a group of swindlers and libertines, and her evidence against her old friend, it is reasonable to suppose, was only dictated by a determination to speak the truth when called upon. Madame de Saint Vincent, in whose presence she was examined, did not hesitate to assail her as a false witness, suborned by Richelieu; but the voice of truth proved triumphant, and the marchioness was detected at last. It is worthy of remark that M. Morny Lafon, to whom we are indebted for so complete a knowledge of the case, is the grandson of this Mademoiselle de Saint Victor, who, long after the termination of the affair, died as Veuve Lafon in one of the provinces.

What was the result of the dispute? Of all the extraordinary particulars connected with this case, none was more extraordinary than the decree pronounced by the Parliament. The bills and letters that had been brought before the court were declared forgeries, and Madame de Saint Vincent was ordered to indemnify the holders for the loss they had sustained; but all the accused parties were discharged, and the duke, for attempting to punish fraud, and to promote the ends of justice, was mulcted of a large sum in the shape of costs and damages. By this decree nobody could be satisfied. There were forged bills, but no apparent forger, and Richelieu and his little friend might remain as they were, one suspected of atrocious calumny, the other of a heinous crime, according to the whim of public opinion. As for the holders of the bills, it was established that they had a claim for indemnity on a lady who was not worth a sou.

According to the judgment of posterity, pronounced before the publication of the details of this strange affair, Richelieu was guilty of what we commonly call "sharp practice;" was too hasty in consigning to prison

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every suspected party, without deliberation or inquiry, and evidently sought to make a wrongful employment of his name and influence to force the machinery of justice to his own ends. But it seems that when this verdict was pronounced, a much greater degree of intimacy between the marshal and the marchioness than appears to have actually existed, was assumed, as a matter of course. Henceforth Richelieu, if he cannot be considered altogether immaculate, will simply look like a gallant in his dotage infamously duped by an artful woman, and justified in his quick resentment by the shameful fraud which had been perpetrated in his name. But however opinions might vary with respect to Richelieu, there is no doubt that the Parliament, by its decree, stamped itself with lasting infamy, and that when it again expired, after its galvanic resuscitation, it had incurred the contempt of all honest men. Richelieu had been one of the chief instigators of the *coup d'état* by which the Parliament had been abolished in the preceding reign; and it was thought better that a convicted forger should go unpunished, and a gang of swindlers be indemnified, than that the gentlemen of the long robe should forfeit the luxury of avenging themselves on a noble foe.

Home.

Two birds within one nest;
Two hearts within one breast;
Two souls within one fair
Firm league of love and prayer,
Together bound for aye, together blest.

An ear that waits to catch
A hand upon the latch;
A step that hastens its sweet rest to win;
A world of care without,
A world of strife shut out,
A world of love shut in.

DORA GREENWELL.

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"Going to the Dogs."

The wonder of my life has been, that out of my many quondam acquaintances, who seemed to me on the high road to the Isle of Dogs, so very few have actually gone there. Surely, that Providence which appears to watch over drunken men, must take remarkable care of the many hare-brained creatures who seem never born to behave themselves like people in their sober senses.

Not long since, meeting an old school-fellow who, as Tutor of —— College, Cambridge, and for many years connected with one of our great military academies, had seen the wild-oats of some thousands of young men sown with ample time to grow—I asked him what he thought of the difficulties, of which we hear so much, and the desperate struggle for subsistence supposed peculiar to this high-pressure generation. His long experience, I was pleased to find, pretty nearly coincided with my own. We could neither of us recal any single instance in which any gentleman's son had sunk to a state of painful degradation, unless by more than ordinary recklessness or misconduct. "But," continued my friend, "many a worthless fellow who deserved to have gone to the dogs, has fared better than he deserved, through the unwearied kindness of his relations and friends."

Two points are wonderfully in favour of these men—family feeling and family pride. "After all Fred's wilful extravagance," said a brother-in-law, only the other day, "and drained as his sister's family has been, I never thought I should have given him another penny, but literally he must have applied to the parish of Marylebone for bread, and—to say nothing of his sister's feelings—there is something so painful after an intimacy for half my life, something so discreditable to be known to have a relation so situated, that the end of it was, grumbling all the time, I made him a weekly allowance."

Professional men are ruined, and go on; and apparently as well off nearly as ever. There was my friend the doctor—Dr. Slop (we will call him). One day he called together his butcher, his grocer, his daughter's schoolmistress, and other long-suffering creditors, and said, "My debts are 1,500*l.*, my goods and chattels are assigned under a bill of sale, and if you put in an execution, a big white jar of leeches, with drugs and gallipots, are all you will get; but, *per contra*, I have a fluctuating estate in mumps, measles, and midwifery cases, that averages 800*l.* a year. But all this requires that I should still keep up appearances, and your security will vanish unless you leave me 600*l.* a year to go on with." I actually knew a case in which creditors subscribed to keep a man afloat, to work on at the rate of one pound for them and three for himself.

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But the professions furnish but a very small contingent of those who "go to the dogs." For professional men have *habits*, as well as knowledge, which generally save them from the lowest depths of social misery. It is of the "do-nothings"—of the foolish sons of foolish mothers—who either were brought up to nothing, or followed some profession too loungingly to overtake it—it is of them we care alone to speak, having observed not a few, and marked several distinct stages of their progress to the Isle of Dogs. These stages are generally much the same, and the men are easy to classify according to their ages, or the years it takes either to tire out or to see the last of their relations—though some go down hill much faster than others.

The first stage is generally run by about thirty-five years of age at the latest. Youth, and all youthful indulgence, by that time have passed away—many of your old family friends have passed away, too, and you find yourself among a set in society who look hard at you, are particular about introductions, and rigorously sum you up for what you are, and not at all for what you have been; and you begin to stand very little on the respectability of your family, and very much upon your own.

There was Charles Willes. He talked about all kinds of professions, but followed none. He wanted "something under Government," and Charlie's ideas of "something under Government" were amusing. He once told me that "something in the Woods and Forests, or some out-of-door work, would suit him exactly; but a high stool in an office would be the death of him." At last his father lost all patience with him, principally because "Great Western" dividends had gone down to something fractional, and as Charlie thought that the older he grew the more money he was entitled to spend, the paternal ire did one day culminate at such a pitch over long bills for lavender kids, patent leather boots, and "follies changing with the varying hour," that Charlie was sentenced to transportation, in the modern sense of the term—that is, condemned to emigrate: but just then the father died, and the mother—Lord love the whole generation of them—would not confirm the sentence. So Charlie lived on idly and extravagantly, till his three sisters had married, and last of all his mother died and was buried; and the only warm heart that no folly or recklessness on Charlie's part could ever chill, was buried with her. Then came the opening of the will, and the family did not feel more indulgent to Charlie, when they found that though the Prodigal had already had his share, a pound a week was charged on the sisters' portions notwithstanding. But the sisters still felt sisterly, and Charlie was billeted from one to another till they had hungry and expensive children to provide for. From that hour, Charlie's idleness was seen in all its frightful enormity, simply because what Dr. Chalmers called "the expulsive influence of a new affection" squeezed and elbowed Charlie out of the sisters' heart. However, he hung on a little longer, being allowed the run of his teeth and the run of the house—married people, when they won't part from their money, will yet stand money's

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worth; and family charity is very much after the fashion of the new Poor Law: they will take you into the House, but fight against all out-door relief. You may fancy what my feelings were, at the last Horticultural —knowing, as I do, that every shilling had been wrung from grumbling relatives, if not borrowed, or won at billiards from soft and silly companions—when Charlie appeared so stylish and well-got-up, from the tips of his fingers to the ends of his toes, that any plain man who pays his way would look barely passable in comparison!

I am sure some one must suffer for all this. It cannot be all honest, and the day of reckoning must come; for the stage of idleness soon leads to—

Stage the Second. In this stage I can follow Charlie's downward progress, for I see it in his more wily friend John Watling. John has survived father, mother, and even the old aunt who clung to him so long, having nursed him as a child, put up with him during his holidays, and change-of-aired him at sundry times for years; and now John has had positive notice from his brother-in-law that "he must find something to do," and all the family interest has been brought to bear with one final spasmodic effort to procure some "genteel"—there's the everlasting difficulty—"genteel employment." Well: one merchant looked askew at John's moustache. His sister implored him to shave it off before he went to the office for the firm of Catcher and Co. to take his measure, but John became furious at this practical suggestion; for John's was just that kind of moustache that proves an *alibi* of all worldly sense and working qualities: so that chance came to nothing. Another man, an old friend of the Watling family, said he was willing to do what he could, but seven-and-thirty, with (he added, privately) a seedy look into the bargain, was too old for beginning business. John had not the knowledge or the capital to be "master," or the tact or temper to be "man." "The son of a grocer," he added, "would feel rich and cheerful, where a gentleman felt poor and miserable. Indeed, I could not endure to be hampered in business by the sensitive feelings of any man." In short, "gentility" in middle life is a bar to all employment.

When last I heard of John, he was trying to order everybody's wine, and everybody's coals, and even had thoughts of taking everybody's likeness in a touching-up photographic line; for I have observed, many men can draw who can do nothing else: but, first of all, he wants everybody's name as security for an advance of commodities to trade with; but this everybody has the presence of mind to refuse, well knowing that all the gains will be spent from hand to mouth, and all the losses left for his obliging bondsmen.

While John Watling's future is yet undecided, though, to my mind, clear enough, I read its continuation in Philip Wardlaw, whose idleness has graduated in profligacy and dishonour. "Doing nothing" is, with idle men, quite a misnomer. Lazy and luxurious, they soon form very costly and self-indulgent habits—bad habits all the more ruinous in their

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consequences because the drained and disgusted relatives who support them always fancy that the least they can do is to behave themselves, to eat humble pie with an appetite, and, in short, to be models of amiability and every social and domestic virtue. There never was such a mistake! With men like Phil., drinking and smoking soon become necessaries of life. Philip soon proved, as Edie Ochiltree said, "an unco' bad example in any weel-regulated family;" and his sister grew uproarious beyond all patience, when her husband appeared rather less like a steady family man and decidedly more lax for her Philip's company, and Philip was threatened, in Irish phrase, "with the key of the street."

As to declaiming against Philip's self-indulgence—in default of something to do, the craving for follies of all kinds reaches a point of morbid feeling actually irresistible. Idle men tempt Satan to tempt them. They had need be of the stuff that martyrs are made of. A man's principles will commonly stand so much strain and no more. His composition is made up and moulded for the temperate zones of common life, but thawing in the torrid regions of passions fired without diversion, or shrinking before penury's nipping blast or the wintry chill of that scorning, scowling world that expects all the more perfections because you are poor.

I am sure it takes as much self-denial, high principle, good temper, and virtue of all sorts to steady and to ballast one idle man as would keep ten busy men in innocence itself. Added to this, they say, "Philip is so ungrateful we can do nothing more for him." Just as if, in this mortal world, any one man's gratitude ever were known to swell up to the inordinate dimensions of any grudging donor's expectations.

No wonder a man like Philip goes fast down hill. As one symptom of his declension Philip soon found himself out of nearly all society: for some men looked cool at him, and long before others might have followed their example, Philip voted his friends "a bad lot altogether," and boasted that he had dropped their acquaintance first.

All this Philip admitted to his cousin, Arthur Willoughby, a thriving young man in a public office. The difference between the lot of the two men is singular—Arthur has a Sunday dinner at the house of one old family friend, and short-dated invitations to fill Banquo's seat with another. Arthur's cheerful looks and honest endeavours to do well, it does every family man's heart good to see. He has all the benefit of that natural inclination—one of the beneficent arrangements of Providence on virtue's side—which prompts us to help those who help themselves: so ready are we all to give a friendly hand to second those manly efforts which promise to reward our kindness by some gratifying results.

The following sentence from a good, fatherly old boy at this moment rings merrily in my ear:—"Fill your glass, Arthur, and pass the bottle. But, when do you get your next step in the Treasury? What! not till Christmas, nine months hence? That's much too slow for my liking; I must speak to Lord Grey's secretary and see if I can push you on a little faster."

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Now, it is by this genial, generous feeling, which God has planted in the human breast, that many a worthy, striving young fellow has a timely shove up-hill—how or why he little dreams. But men like Philip are very wormwood to all earnest-minded men—so natural is our reluctance to find the drones faring as well as the busy bees of society, that most men would rather see them down in the world than up.

But, unhappily, since making the above observations, time has passed on, and I have met Philip Wardlaw again. He has learnt the truth that your own kith and kin will tire at last, and that, "as man never continueth in one stay," some die off, and others are widely scattered, and are no more seen. "Out of sight out of mind," is pre-eminently the fate of "the poor relation." So Philip finds himself alone in the wide wide world—that world in which, however wide, when a man cannot pay his standing, he very soon finds there is no room for him!

Well, we met Phil in the Strand, looking very poor and very miserable; and being equally averse either to avoid his company or to be seen in it, we stepped aside with him into a chop-house. We were not a little moved by comparing what he was with what he had been, and "drops of compassion trembled in our eyelids" as we "bid him tell his pitiful story":—"You little thought ever to see me in my present sorry plight," he said, looking down upon his threadbare clothes; "but the last twelve months have wrought quite a revolution in my thoughts, and feelings, and ideas of things in general. Often as I had heard the common saying about one day 'coming to my senses,' I never knew what it meant while I had any one to keep me; but now my eyes are opened. I have awaked as from a dream and feel like the creature of another sphere: for, the world has changed with me altogether. Even the very streets are quite different; for ever since my clothes became seedy, and clean linen so scarce—you see I am forced to button-up in the dog-days—I have found myself instinctively keeping to all the lanes and alleys. I always cut Regent Street and go through Golden Square—not that anybody is very likely to come up to me—no—I walk the town as much alone as if I were dropped from a balloon in some town in Kamtschatka.

"Various things strike me as queer and anomalous in the winter of my fortunes. It was easier far, while I could hold my head up, to be invited to all the luxuries of the season than it would be now to beg a loaf of bread. The same men who will spend pounds to be 'genteel,' won't spare a penny to be generous. Very strange, isn't it? There is nothing between turtle soup and starvation!

"Time hangs very heavy when a fellow's poor. You see I have no home—only a small bedroom—a poor garret—and a man is not expected to be there in the day-time except once in a way. There are penny reading-rooms—one in Leicester Square—but you can't stay there all the morning; they soon find out what you are after; and one of the waiters said he should have thought I had taken a lease of the premises! In fine summer weather I can do pretty well; but the winter is awful. I dread next winter.

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Last Christmas-day all the recollections that flooded upon my mind almost broke my heart. As to the idle man's usual resource, lounging into shops and looking about me, all that has now passed away. The shopman comes up to me and asks what I want? Even the Parks now can only be said to be half open to me. I only dare go there in the mornings, and as to loitering about Rotten Row, I should dread the very thought of such a thing—there are glances I might encounter which would pierce me to the soul. And as to the Serpentine, I have not been near it for weeks. The last time, one of the Humane Society men dodged me and eyed me so suspiciously I really believe he thought I wanted to drown myself. So, all I can do is to mope about under the trees, passing gaunt and wretched-looking creatures like myself—men whose coats speak of West End tailors and of better days. Some of these men look at you sympathetically, as if poverty were itself an introduction, and we all belonged to the same sorry and stranded fraternity. One man above fifty years of age said he had been a gentleman commoner of Christchurch College, Oxford; another, only seven years before, had lived in Carlton Terrace, a dashing man in the Guards. You wonder to hear such things; but, save from an occasional begging-letter, you are never likely to hear of men like these, or what has become of them. If you were in such a condition you would feel a natural shrinking from all your former acquaintance; and as to your relations, they would take very good care no one should hear it from them."

After finishing his mutton-chops, and warming into a yet more communicative humour over a pint of stout, he said he was much obliged by my kindness, and even the shilling it had saved him (of course I could not leave him without a more substantial assistance) was something to dwell on and to feel happy about all that day; for "a little happinesss goes a long way in these times." He then told me that all he had was twelve shillings a week, and even that depended on the life of a sister, or the caprice of her husband. He had one good, kind friend, an Irish reporter, who had let him into a little penny-a-lining. "I attend for him at Bow Street sometimes, when he has something more profitable elsewhere. I also have a reading ticket for the British Museum, and I once tried hard to find something ancient to freshen up for the publishers; but it was 'no go.' One after another in Paternoster Row—anything but Pater noster—anything but very fatherly—I found it: it is full of surly clerks, who pretend to go to the principals, and choke you off without seeing them—one after another of these fellows eyed me as if I were not a likely sort" (this of course showed their discrimination), "and said they could not enter on any proposals without an introduction of a literary kind.

"My friend the reporter said he never had anything but what he worked for since he was eighteen years of age; but 'necessity made a man marvellously inventive, and whetted his eye-teeth'—just what I experienced; and if I had been brought up as he had been, he thought I should have developed some marketable qualifications long before my time of life."

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I left Philip Wardlaw with all the more pain because I clearly saw that had he not been ruined by the cruel kindness of his friends, there really was some "marketable" stuff to be got out of him. However, I very plainly perceived that he would not live that hard life long. The following winter—it would appear that his fears of it were ominous—I received an imploring letter to visit him in Wardour Street. There I found him with a rheumatic attack of a serious kind—the cold and draughts of London streets had pierced the joints of nature's harness—inflammation of the heart followed, and poor Philip died!

There is much reason to believe that the old expression, "Never say die," has actually no little to do with the issues of life. When a man's spirit is broken, I would not give much for his chance of length of days; and a cast-down gentleman soon becomes broken-hearted, and his system is lowered to a point that invites disease, with little vital power to bear up against it.

Not long since, while fitting out a friend's cabin at the West India Docks, I had some talk with one of those Jew slop-sellers, ever touting with a list of "fixings" and of cabin furniture to remind the unwary traveller of far more wants than he ever thinks of before starting, or ever finds out afterwards; and I asked Moses concerning those gaunt gangs of dock labourers—many of them once having seen better days—who were said to find in unlading cargoes and working at the windlass that sphere for unskilled labour which poor gentlemen sought in vain in other places. He replied: "Yes, sir; they have tried it on in times past, but they can't stand the living—the common Irish drive them out of the market. Fill an Irishman's belly, never mind how hard the food, and he is all right; but that won't keep a gentleman's heart up. I know them well; their clothes soon come to hang loose about them; and then—the overlooker need but eye their shimbling shambling figures, and there's no more work for them."

Philip Wardlaw seemed to me the lowest stage, but I soon learnt a lower still—still nearer the Isle of Dogs. William Ballard, a Cantab, having exhausted all his cash and all his credit, and all the patience of his friends besides, enlisted as a common soldier in a regiment going to India. One of the officers proved to have been his chum at Harrow, and smoothed the roughs of regimental life for him all he could—bad at the best—and was the means of making interest for him at Madras, and removing him to an appointment on the Board of Works; but he wrote home that the loneliness was insufferable, and he should soon die—and shortly after, die he did!

In this case—as is too common—the last stage was one of drink and delirium. Poverty, loneliness, and a broken spirit, soon lead a man to drown his misery in liquor: low diet, also, creates a craving for a stimulus. Then the more a man drinks the less he has to eat, and thus the lowest depths of degradation are reached by rapid strides. I have a lively recollection of the confessions of an unhappy friend—one who

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was eventually arrested in his downward course. He said, "I should have been assisted once before, but the man who inquired into my case mistook the casual intoxication from liquor taken from sheer exhaustion before I could eat anything, for habitual drunkenness, and reported that nothing could be done in a case so desperate."

No doubt some ruined men are more callous and shameless than others, but these are generally of the younger sort. One day about four years since, as Lord P—— was going over a crossing in Regent Street, the sweeper, whom he had at first disregarded, appeared strangely familiar as well as importunate, and said, "Come, my lord, you'll give me a trifle for old acquaintance' sake."

"You, indeed! Why, where can I ever have seen you before?"

"What! don't you remember Jobber Day, at Eton?"

Lord P—— gave his old school-fellow a sovereign, and passed on. This Etonian came down to sweep a crossing before he was thirty years of age.

Day had been a very popular fellow at Eton, and very rich in "leave books" when he left: though his ideas were very similar to those of an old fellow-collegian of ours, who said, the last morning he spent in Oxford, "Any gentleman may have a pick at my books, for now I have finished my education I never can want to set eyes on books again." The reason we called him "Jobber" was, that some one heard Day's father was a large cattle-breeder—so the fellows, never very complimentary, said he was a pig-jobber; and Jobber Day was his sobriquet ever after.

Poor Day, I pity him, and with him many thousands like him who "go to the dogs" from the same cause. The misfortunes of such men date from the day of their birth—born with "a cell more in the heart, and one less in the head." Why, what can you hope or expect of a good, generous soul so constituted—I know just such a case—as to be allowing a sick person ten shillings a week, while writing, all round the family, to pay for the necessaries of life, for themselves, all the time! Day was like a man born (we used to say) with half a bottle of champagne in him, and who never got over the effervescence to the hour of his death. He had none of the Scotch temperament, and was very strong of the Irish: and between the two there is a very wide difference. The latter will feast and be merry with the bailiff in the house; the former will have no appetite for his dinner to-day, if he sees any doubt of another some years after date. At the present day, people called prudent look almost too far into the future to enjoy the present; and the devil-me-care temperament of men like Day is really deserving of a better fate.

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Out of the World.

PART I.

One afternoon Dr. Rich rode up as usual to the door of Dumbleton House; he passed in through the iron gates, came up the sweep along which the lilac-trees were beginning to scatter their leaves, and then he dismounted at the stone steps under the portico (it was a red brick house with a Grecian portico), rang at the bell, and asked if Miss Berners was at home.

He was shown into the drawing-room—a pleasant, long, ground-floor room, full of comfortable chairs and sofas, with windows through which you saw the garden, the autumn flowers all a-glow, the sun setting behind the trees. One or two tall pictures of Dumbletons who had once lived in the long drawing-room and walked in the garden, but who no longer came and went, hung upon the walls. There was a pleasant perfume of hot-house flowers and burning wood. The room was hot, be-chintzed, be-perfumed; Horatia, dressed in a black velvet gown, was sitting by the fire.

She got up to welcome the doctor. He thought that this black-velvet lady, with the glowing window behind her, was like a picture he had seen somewhere; or had he read about it? or had he dreamt it? Somehow, he knew she was going to say, "We are going away; good-by!" And Horatia gave him her hand, and said,—

"Oh, Doctor Rich!—I am so sorry—my aunt tells me we are going away!"

"Well," he said, wondering a little at this odd realization, "I am sorry to lose my patient. Though, in truth, I had meant to tell you to-day that you yourself can best cure yourself. All you want is regular exercise and living, and occupation. And this is physic I cannot tell the chemist to put up in a bottle and send you."

"What makes you think I want occupation?" said Horatia, a little angry, and not over-pleased.

"Don't most women?" said the doctor, smiling. "Don't I find you like prisoners locked up between four walls, with all sorts of wretched make-shift employments, to pass away time? Why, this room is a very pretty prison, but a great deal too hot to be a wholesome one."

"You are right; I am a prisoner," said Horatia, in her velvet gown; "but I assure you I work very hard." The doctor looked doubtful. "Shall I tell you what I do?" she went on. "This is not the first time you speak in this way."

"It is an old observation of mine," Doctor Rich said, "and I cannot help repeating, that women in your class of life have not enough to do."

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Horatia's First Visit

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"That is because you do not know: take my life, for instance; I never have a moment to myself. I have to keep up, correspond, make appointments, dine, drive, drink tea, with three or four hundred people all as busy and over-tired as I am. I go out to dinner, to a party, to a ball almost every night in the season. All the morning I shop and write letters; all the afternoon I drive about here and there, and drink five o'clock tea. I am never alone; I must for ever be talking, doing, attending, coming, going. Is not this work for ten women instead of one poor, unhappy, tired-out creature like myself?" cried she, strangely excited.

Dr. Rich was a soft-hearted man, especially so when he thought of Horatia, and he said, kindly, "That does, indeed, seem a dreadful life to me. Can't I help you? Can't I prescribe some more rational scheme of existence?"

"No, no; nobody, nothing can save me," said Miss Berners. "I am utterly jaded, battered, wearied out. I owe everything to my aunt. I must go her ways and lead her life; there is no help for me."

"But you might, perhaps," said the doctor, hesitating—"perhaps——"

"No!" cried Horatia, with some emotion, "I shall never marry! if that is what you mean. Ten or fifteen years ago it might have been; but now—now I am ashamed to look people in the face when she tries to . . . . What dreadful things I am saying!—but, all the same, I must go on, and on, and on. There is no rest for me except where the weary go in time. Where—where——" She finished her sentence by bursting out crying. She was ill and unnerved, and unlike herself, so that there was some excuse for her.

Dr. Rich thought so, at least. He went up to one of the windows, and, pushing aside the flower-stand, opened it wide, and looked out into the garden. Then he walked up and down the room once or twice, and then he came back to the fire. It was a tall old chimney-piece, round which the Dumbletons (the masters of the house) had assembled for two centuries and more. A lady let into the wall, with a pearl necklace and powdered hair, seemed to look him full in the face, and nod her head once or twice.

Horatia had sunk down on a low sort of couch, and was wiping her tears away. The fresh gust of air which blew in through the open window cheered and revived her more than any consoling remarks or talking. When she had wiped her tears, she looked up, and he saw all the lines that care had written under these dark eyes, and he was suddenly filled with immense sympathy, pity, liking. For a moment he was silent, and then he made a great resolve, and he said, in a low voice—

"I think I could help you, if you would let me. Instead of being a straw in a whirlpool, how would you like to come and stagnate in a pond? How would you like to be a country doctor's wife?"

Horatia blushed up, started with amazement, and then leant back

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among her cushions to hide her agitation, while Dr. Rich went on to say, with extra deliberation, that social differences had never impressed him greatly—that he could not see why a fine lady should not take a turn at everyday life; "for it is at best only a very common place, everyday life that I have to offer you," he said smiling.

He was apt to be a little didactic; but he had soon finished his speech, and he waited for Horatia to begin hers.

"I am so surprised," she said, trying to speak steadily. "I—I don't —you don't know me, Dr. Rich."

The doctor answered, still at his ease, that he had wished to marry for some time past, that he did not expect that his sister, who had been his housekeeper, would remain with him always, that he had never fancied anybody in the neighbourhood, and it seemed to him that this arrangement might make them both more happy than they had either of them been hitherto. He spoke so quietly and deliberately (it was his way when he was excited) that Horatia never guessed that this was an ardent, loving heart, full of chivalrous impulse, of passionate feeling; a treasure which he was offering her—that this homely country doctor was as much her superior in every tender, feminine quality as in manly strength, and power, and vigour.

She was looking at him intently with flushed cheeks. She saw a middle-sized, thick-set man, with a kind face, with what seemed to her trustworthy and keen eyes, instead of sleepy ones like her own, with a very sweet voice, whose tones she seemed to hear after he had ceased speaking.

She pictured to herself his ivy-grown house. She had once driven past it with her cousin, Mrs. Dumbleton. She tried to imagine the daily round of life, the quiet little haven, the silence after all these years of noise and racket, the stillness after all this coming and going—one good friend instead of a hundred more or less indifferent. A man with every worldly advantage would not have tempted her so greatly just at that moment. She thought to herself that she wished she had the courage to say 'yes.'

When she found courage at last to speak at all, she said—not the 'no' she imagined she was going to say—but, "I can't—I can't give you any answer now. I will send—I will write. I will talk to them. Please go, before they come in."

So Dr. Rich made her a little grave bow, and walked away. His plebeian breeding stood him in good service. He was quite composed and quiet, and at his ease, and here she was trembling, and agitated, and scarcely able to control herself. When he was gone she went upstairs, slowly crossing the hall, and passing along the gallery which led to her room. There was nobody else coming or going, there were only gathering shadows and shut oaken doors, and more Dumbletons hanging from the walls, and windows set in carved panels, which looked out over the country and the tree-tops, and the sunset.

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She stopped and looked out. She saw the high-road gleaming white between the dark woods on either side; she saw a horseman riding away; past the gate, and the haycock, and the little row of cottages; past the break in the trees, and then the road turned, and she could see him no longer. She looked out for some ten minutes, without much heeding all that was going on. Great purple clouds heaving out of the horizon, blending and breaking; winds rising; leaves fluttering in the evening breeze; birds wheeling in the air, and rooks cawing from their nests; the great Day removing in glory, and speeding away in solemn state to other countries; the Night arriving, with her pompous, shining train—all these great changes of dynasties and states of living did not trouble her; only as the sun disappeared behind the trees, Horatia found, to her great surprise, that she had almost made up her mind—that what had seemed at first so impossible, and so little to be thought of; that what had appeared to her only a day ago unattainable, and far beyond her reach, was hers now, if she had but the resolution to open her hand and to take it—to accept that tranquil existence, that calm happiness, which she had told herself a thousand thousand times was never to be hers. Suddenly the poor battered barque had drifted into a calm little haven: the ocean was roaring still; the winds and the waves beating and tossing all about; but here, sheltered, protected, safely anchored, she might stay if she would. And yes, she would stay: if she had scarcely the courage to remain, she had still less to face the ocean again. She would stay, come what might. Perhaps Horatia exaggerated to herself the past storms and troubles of her life, but it is certain (and so she kept saying to herself) that at two-and-thirty she was old enough to be her own mistress. She was not ungrateful to her aunt for years of kindness, but she could surely best judge for herself. And so, telling herself that she was not ungrateful, she began to wonder how she could send a note to the doctor; how she could best break the dreadful news to Lady Whiston, who was her aunt, to Mrs. Dumbleton, who was her cousin and Lady Whiston's daughter. It is a way that people have; they tell themselves that they are not ungrateful, and they go and do the very thing which does not prove their gratitude.

The ladies came in very late, and went to their rooms at once to make ready for dinner. Horatia, who had dressed with nervous haste, and who was too much excited to be still, went wandering up and down the drawing-room in her white dinner-dress, trying to find words and courage to tell them of what had occurred.

The housemaids came in to put the room to rights, to straighten cushions and chairs, to sweep the hearth, and make up the fire. The Dumbletons were chilly people, and fires burned on their hearth almost all the year round. Then they departed, leaving a cheerful blaze behind them, comfortable furniture in orderly array, lights with green shades, paper folded on the table. The place might have looked tranquil and homelike enough but for the restless Horatia pacing backwards and

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forwards. She hardly noticed Mr. Dumbleton, the master of the house, who came in quietly and sank down in a big chair, and watched her as she flitted to and fro. This constant coming and going worried him. He was a good-looking, kindly, shrewd, reserved young man. He was usually silent, but he would answer if he was spoken to. Sometimes he spoke of his own accord.

To-night he spoke, and said, "What is the matter, Horatia? What are you taking all this exercise for?" and Horatia stopped suddenly, and turned round, and looked at him for a minute without speaking. An hour ago her mind had been made up, and now again she was hesitating, shrinking, and thinking that she had almost rather change her mind than tell it, it seemed so terrible a task. But here was an opening. Henry Dumbleton was good-natured, perhaps he might help her; at all events, he would give her good advice. She stopped short in her walk, stood straight and still in her white dress, with a drooping head. "You can help me," she said, at last looking up; "I am trying to decide for myself for once, and I do not know how to do it."

"You surprise me—and so you actually don't know your own mind," said Dumbleton, smiling.

"Tell me," said Horatia suddenly, "would you think a woman foolish who—suppose you were a woman over thirty, Henry!"—

"I shouldn't own to it," says Mr. Dumbleton.

"Henry, listen to me," said Horatia. "Suppose the case of some one whose life is passing on, who has no settled home, who has not known for years and years the blessing and privilege of being much considered, or much loved. Don't think me heartless—aunt Car has been kindness itself—I shall always, always be grateful; but——"

"All the gratitude in the world would not induce me to live with her, if that is what you mean," said Dumbleton.

"Oh, Henry!" said Horatia, coming and standing in front of him; "should you think very badly of me if, if—can *anything* be a *mésalliance* for a woman in my position?" The tears came into her eyes as she spoke, and Dumbleton saw that her hands were trembling. I think it was for this foolish reason, as much as for any she could give him, that he determined to help her through the ordeal if he could.

"Who is it?" he asked, a little alarmed as to what the answer might be.

The answer came, and Horatia, blushing, and looking twenty again, said—"Dr. Rich."

"So that is what he came for?" says Henry, opening his eyes.

"Don't you like him?" implored Horatia.

"I think Rich is a capital good fellow," said Dumbleton, hesitating. "I don't think he is doing a very wise thing. You will have to turn over a new leaf, Ratia, and tuck up your sleeves, and all that sort of thing; but I suppose you are prepared?"

"You do like him?" said Horatia. "Oh, Henry, I think you are very,

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very kind! I did not expect to find one single person to listen to me so patiently." And Horatia was, in truth, a little surprised that Henry did not insist more upon the inequality of the match. To her, brought up as she had been, in the semi-fashionable world, the difference seemed greater than it really was. She seemed to be performing some heroic feat; she had a sort of feeling that she was a princess stepping down from her throne; that her resolution did her extraordinary credit; that the favour she was conferring was immense; that Dr. Rich's gratitude must be at least equal to her condescension. . . . . .

And now I must confess that the doctor only spoke a truth when he had said that social differences did not greatly impress him. For Horatia herself he had the tenderest regard and admiration; for her position as the niece of a baroness, and the cousin of one or two Honourables, he did not greatly care; he might have thought more of it if he had been more in the world. As it was, the subject scarcely occurred to him. He was at that moment close at home, riding along a dark lane, hedged with black-looking trees, with the stars coming out overhead in a sky swept by drifting clouds. The wind was rising and shaking the branches, but the doctor was absorbed as he rode along, and as he thought with tenderest affection of the gracious and charming and beautiful woman whom he had enshrined in the temple of his honest heart. It was for herself that he loved her, and not for her surroundings. He would have married her out of a hovel if she had happened to be born there, whereas she, I fear, took him more for what he had to give her than for what he was. She wanted to marry him, not because he was upright and tender, and wise; not because she told herself she could hope to make him happy and be a good wife to him —but because she told herself he could make her happy. She was by way of giving up everything for him, but in truth, if she gave anything up, it was for her own sake, because she was tired of it.

Lady Whiston and her daughter came down as the dinner was announced. Mr. Dumbleton offered his arm to his mother-in-law, the other two followed across the hall. The dinner table dazzled them for a moment with its lights and shining silver and flowers, but their eyes soon became accustomed, and they sat down and took their places. Lady Whiston was a little shrivelled up and rather flighty old lady; Mrs. Dumbleton, a kind little fat woman, who chirped and chattered, and responded to her mother's constant flow of talk. Mr. Dumbleton, as usual, carved, and did not mix much in the conversation. Horatia could hardly rouse herself to attend to what was going on. Why are people always expected to rouse themselves and to talk of the things they are not thinking about?

"I am quite worn out," Lady Whiston was saying. "Henry, you know how far from strong I am. I drove to town this morning. I was shopping for two hours. I lunched at the De Beauvilles'. There I met Jane Parsons, who insisted upon taking me all over the South Kensington Museum, and from there to Marochetti's studio. We then went back to Chapel Street, and paid a number of visits. We got to Lady Ferrars'

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about half-past five, and had only time to drink a cup of tea. I found the carriage with Augusta in it waiting at the door. Henry, you ought to get Lady Jane to come down and stay with you. There is no one like her."

Mr. Dumbleton smiled rather grimly, and Mrs. Dumbleton hastily changed the conversation, and said,—

"Well, dear Ratia, what have you been about all day?"

Horatia looked at her plate, Mr. Dumbleton looked at Horatia.

"Did Dr. Rich call again?" said Lady Whiston.

"Yes," Horatia said.

"Those people are really unconscionable," cried the old lady. "Horatia, I hope you made him understand that we are going away, and all that, and shall not require his attendance any more. I don't know what he will not charge. He is not an M.D. though he calls himself a doctor. Now, Mr. Bonsey, a married man with a large family, never asked me more than 3*s.* 6*d.* Those sort of people must be kept down."

Horatia was blushing pinker and pinker, Henry Dumbleton was more and more amused, and so a queer desultory conversation went on, all at cross purposes. There seemed to be some fatality in the way, in which doctors kept popping up with every course, and from under every dish-cover. Dr. Rich, and Mr. Caton his partner, went round with the *entrées;* with the roast Mr. Bonsey was served over again, and all the London physicians. And then, with the dessert, arrived a series of horrible illnesses, which had attacked various ladies of high rank, symptoms following each other in alarming succession. Horatia heard nothing. She was sitting in a sort of dream, only she listened when they spoke of Dr. Rich. Was it indeed fated? Was this new unknown world opening to her? Was she an alien already, doomed to go away and leave them all, and live the unknown life he had offered her? It seemed unreal and shadowy, like the night all round about. When the ladies got up from table, Horatia followed. But Dumbleton got up, too, contrary to his usual custom, and said, "I will tell my lady," in an undertone, as she passed him.

So Horatia, with a beating heart, stayed in the hall, and went and gazed out through the glass door at the black landscape, at the murky, wind-blown sky. It had been raining, but the clouds were breaking; the crescent moon rose palely and faintly from behind the black trees, the veils of vapour wreathed and curled in the sky, the wind blew in soft sudden gusts over the country, and across the grass and the fields. A lamp was burning, hanging from the pillars in the hall. It looked like a sort of temple, and Horatia in her white robes might have passed for a priestess, looking out at the heavens and trying to read her fate—her fate, which other people after all were settling and arranging at their fancy, for Lady Whiston, discomposed, astonished, indignant, on the drawing-room sofa, was condemning her to live her present life to the very end of her days. Mr. Dumbleton, in the arm-chair, was mildly but firmly marrying her to the doctor. Mrs. Dumbleton was

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sympathizing with her mother and husband alternately, and Horatia herself, who had most at stake, waiting outside, was watching the clouds and the moon. At last Mr. Dumbleton got up with a yawn, and sauntered out of the room. He came out into the hall with the lamp and the flowers and the white-robed lady staring out at the sky. She started as he called her.

"I am going to send down to the station," he said. "The man can take a note if you like to put poor Rich out of suspense. There is a pen and ink in my room." He lit a cigar as he spoke, and went out and stood on the wet steps under the portico. And Horatia, doing as he told her, went into her study. It was all lighted up, for Dumbleton often sat there of an evening. She sat down at his table, and slowly took up a pen, and then hid her face in her hands for a moment, and then wrote, hardly seeing the words as she formed them, hardly knowing what she said:

"You must help me to bear my aunt's displeasure. I have determined to come to you—I know I can rely upon you.

"HORATIA."

She folded up the piece of paper and sealed it, and came out again, carrying it in her hand. Dumbleton, who was still waiting outside talking to one of his grooms, took it without asking any questions. He merely nodded 'thank you,' and gave it to the man: "You can leave this at the doctor's on your way, and call and see if there is an answer coming back."

And then Horatia knew that the die was cast, and with her own hand she had signed and sealed her fate.

Just at that moment Lady Whiston had succeeded, during her son-in-law's absence, in completely talking round her daughter. "We can leave to-morrow or the day after; I shall not see Horatia to-night, I am too much displeased. She must give up this ridiculous scheme."

It was twilight when the tramp of the horse's hoofs came thudding along the quiet glimmering lane which led to the doctor's house. Roberta, the doctor's sister, who had grown very weary of a long *tête-à-tête*, ran out to the door to meet her brother, and Mr. Caton followed more leisurely. As James dismounted, agitated, wearied, excited, the kindly welcome seemed inexpressibly soothing and pleasant.

For home opened its wide door to him, he thought, and seemed to say, "Come in; here you have a right to enter, a right to be loved; whatever befalls you without, come in; forget your anxiety, your suspense, put away your fears for to-night. Welcome, welcome!" Home said all this as Berta kissed him, and Caton said—

"I say, James Rich, you ask me to dinner at six, and it is near eight before you come in."

"I—I couldn't come; I was detained," said Dr. Rich; "order dinner, Berta."

And in a few minutes they also were sitting down to dinner, at a

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table with roses, with candles, and over-roasted mutton; with Betty in desultory attendance: it was a silent repast, chill, belated, and yet pleasant and friendly enough.

After the sun had set, as I have said, the purple clouds turned to grey, and to black, and the wreathing mist began to fall down in occasional showers pattering against the window; a great misty wall of darkness seemed to hide London and all its lights. Berta could not go out into the garden for her evening stroll, and she had to return into the darkling little sitting-room after dinner, while the gentlemen sat over their wine.

She got out one of her long seams to sew, and as she stitched she faintly wondered what was to be the end of these silent *tête-à-têtes* and long seams. She heard their voices rising and mumbling in the dining-room; she could distinguish James's soft tones from Caton's harsh ones; she asked herself whether it was possible that she could one day like the harsh voice as well as she loved the other; she broke her thread, and stitched—no, never, never; nobody could be to her what her brother was—whom else did she want? she would live for him always. Only that morning they had had a little discussion out in the garden—all shining then with sun and colour, not grey and eerie-like as now—about poor Caton's merits. She liked him and she didn't like him; she almost loved him when he was sad, silent, subdued; she almost hated him if, finding her perchance more kind, he became gay, confident, talkative, and funny. Even James owned sometimes it was a pity that Caton had so noisy a scorn for social observances.

It is very puzzling to define the extraordinary difference, so small and yet so great, which exists between a number of people living in the same place, talking the same tongue, feeling the same emotions. There are, let us say, first, the great people, a number of whom make up what is called the great world. Then, people of the world; then, people out of the world; and, lastly, the people—*le peuple*, properly speaking. Dr. Rich and his sister Roberta, and Mr. Caton, his partner, were people out of the world, who had been very happy notwithstanding. Horatia was a small person of the world, who had been very unhappy in it, and yet who had learned unconsciously certain ways and habits there which made her unlike Roberta, and superior to her as far as mere outward manner was concerned. As for the doctor, he was forty years old and more. He had been a surgeon on board ship, he had been to India and back, he had knocked about for fifteen years, he had been at death's door once or twice (the last time was when he nearly died of small-pox, before Roberta came to live with him—some one, to whom she was not as grateful as she might have been, had nursed him through it all). If years and experience; if rubbing up against people of every degree, from savages without any clothes at all, to lords and ladies in silken gear; if a good heart, if good wit, and good education do not make a gentleman after twoscore years, it is hard to say what will. Poor Caton had not enjoyed all these advantages—only the good heart was his.

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If Berta had declared that she fancied him, very likely her brother might have regretted her fancy, and thought she was throwing herself away; as she seemed to care little for him—on the contrary, shook her head, laughed, blushed, would have nothing to say when she saw him—James, out of some strange contradiction, had all the more sympathy for Caton because his sister showed so little; asked him to the house, praised him continually, and told Berta at last that she was fine and foolish not to be able to appreciate a kind and honourable man when he came in her way.

"I may be foolish, James; you know I am not fine—I hate fine ladies," said Berta, with whom it was a sore subject.

They had just done breakfast, the doctor had come out for a morning stroll with *The Times* and his cigar, Berta walked beside him with a basketful of roses. The garden was on a slope—a long, narrow, and somewhat neglected strip, with grass, with rose-beds, with elm-trees, with all London and its domes and towers for a background. There lay the city in the valley stretching farther and farther away beyond the morning mist. Long lines of railway viaducts and arches, lonely church spires, domiciles nestling amidst trees, chinking workshops, fields, roads, and gardens, children's voices shouting, cattle lowing, sheep, and the sound of cocks and hens—all this life lay between the doctor's quiet garden and the great misty city. A great silent city it seemed to be as it glistened in the gentle morning rays; for its roar could scarcely reach the two standing on their distant hill-top. Every now and then came the shrill whistle of a train dashing across the landscape and gone in a moment, only a little smoke remained curling, drifting, breaking, shining with sunlight, vanishing away. All the roses were smelling sweet and were heavy with drops of dew, all the birds in the trees were chirping and fluttering, and Berta, in her pink cotton dress, fresh, slim, and smiling, looked up into her brother's face and said—

"You know I am not fine—I hate fine ladies."

Dr. James winced, and puffed his cigar.

"They have never done you any harm. Why should you hate people you know nothing about?" said her brother.

Roberta looked up a little surprised, a little hurt; she could not understand how it was possible that James should speak in such a tone. "They have never done me any *real* harm," she said, in a voice not quite her own. "They have made me feel very uncomfortable."

"Nonsense, my dear Berta," said James, hastily turning away; "that was your fault, not theirs. I can't talk to you now; order a good dinner at all events, for poor Caton is coming, and don't starve him and snub him too." And he walked across the lawn, at the glass door, and Berta heard the hall-door shut with a bang as he rode off to his fate.

Roberta was a born housewife, a domestic woman—she was gentle and deliberate—she was placid and happy—she was contented with small

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interests. A calm summer's evening, a kind word from James, a novel sometimes, a friend to talk to, an occasional jaunt to London—these were her chiefest pleasures. Her troubles lay in her store-room, her kitchen, in the meshes of her needlework, in the cottages of the poor people round about, and now and then, it must be confessed, in occasional and frightful ordeals gone through at her brother's desire, when she called at Dumbleton House, and such like ogres' castles, once in six months. Berta's thoughts were all of objects, of things almost always the most pleasant and the most simple. She had no mental experience in particular: crises of morbid dissatisfaction were undreamt of by her; hankerings after what she could not get, aspirations after other duties than the simple ones which fell to her share, passionate self-reproach and abasement, fervent resolutions, presently to be forgotten—all these things were unknown, unrealized, unimagined by the girl as she came and went about her little busy domain, while Horatia was fuming, fussing, railing at herself and her cruel fate elsewhere.

Berta was not clever. She had not half Miss Berners' powers; she performed her simple duties simply, and without an effort. Horatia did not always do her duty, but sometimes she went through prodigies of self-reproach, control, denial, culture, inspection, condemnation, or whatever it might happen to be.

Roberta's life was a tranquil progress from one day to another. Her steps paced across the grass-plot, tarried at every rose-tree in turn, led her along the walks to her favourite seat in the arbour, into the house again, moving from one room to another, arranging, straightening, ordering.

And so at six o'clock Berta had put out some of her roses upon the dinner-table, dressed herself in her muslin dress, looked into the kitchen to see that all was satisfactory. At five minutes past six Mr. Caton arrived, and found Berta sitting in the window at work.

As the time went by they both began to think that James would never come back. Caton did not like to say what was in his mind when she told him that James was at Dumbleton House, she was so perfectly unconscious. What was the use of setting her against the inevitable fate? Her brother could best tell her if anything was to be told.

Only that morning, with the strange knowledge of another person's feelings which we all possess, Caton had known more than Berta, or Dr. Rich, or Horatia; but meanwhile the day had sped on its course, causes had produced effects, one destiny had evolved out of another, the world rolled into the appointed space in the firmament, and, after ceaselessly travelling hither and thither upon its face for forty years and more, Dr. Rich rode up that afternoon as usual to the door of Dumbleton House, came up the sweep along which the lilacs were beginning to scatter their leaves, and asked if Miss Berners was at home?

And now the eventful day has set, Berta is sewing at her seam. The night is come, and it is raining sudden showers; some one passes the window through the rain; there is a ring at the bell, a brief colloquy, and

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Betty comes in with a letter which she puts upon the table. Berta, busy speculating, wondering to find herself so silly—she always counted silliness and sentiment together—with an effort turns her well-regulated little mind from a dim involuntary mystic dream, and wakes up to every day.

It was time to make the tea, to fold up her work. Should she be able to find her way in the dark to the cupboard upon the landing? Poor little Roberta, she did not guess what was at hand, and in what manner she would find her way there. For she looked up with a smile when the door opened, and James and Caton came in.

Caton glanced at the table and the letter lying there, and then walked across and sat down beside Berta, and began to tell her that he and her brother had been having a discussion, and meanwhile James took up the letter, a candle, and walked away out of the room.

About five minutes passed, and then Berta heard his voice calling—"Roberta!" She ran out to him.

He was standing in the study, with the letter still in his hand; he looked bright, round-eyed, strange, unlike himself. "Berta," he said, "something has made me very happy," and he put out his hand.

She looked up, with her sweet anxious face wondering, as she took it. "Some one has promised to be your sister, whom you must love for my sake," he went on, smiling. He did not see that Berta was trembling and quaking, as she gasped, "Who is it, James?"

"You know her, dear. You have seen her at Mrs. Dumbleton's," the doctor went on. "You must love her, and help me to make her happy."

Berta's grasp loosened, and her heart sank with dismay. She had seen a beautiful fashionable lady at Mrs. Dumbleton's, who had made her feel all elbows when she talked to her; a fine lady—did not she hate fine ladies?—a terrible alarming London beauty. What had he done—what foolish thing had he done? She was clinging to her brother again, with her arms round his neck.

"Oh, how I hope you will be happy! oh, how I hope she will make you happy! Why didn't you tell me? Why have you never said a word?"

"I only made up my mind and spoke to her this afternoon," said her brother, pulling her gently away. "I have only had her answer this moment."

Berta looked at him once again, with her fond doubting eyes. She felt sometimes as if it was the last time, and as if Horatia's husband would not be the same man as her brother James. And then she went gently out of the room, still carrying her work, for she felt that tears were coming into her eyes, and she did not want him to see them. She turned and went upstairs, and then, walking along the familiar dark passage, she felt for the key, and opened the great cupboard door, and put down her work upon the shelf with the lavender. Only as she did so, suddenly a great sorrowful pang came over her, and, with a choking sob, she laid her head upon the shelf, feeling all alone in the dark, with her bitter bitter grief. She had not thought, as she sat below sewing her seam, in what a sad

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fashion it was fated she should put it away. After this night, Roberta could never smell lavender without thinking of darkness and trouble. The rain had ceased by this time, and, as the clouds broke, a faint pale moonlight came creeping coldly along the passage.

While Berta was crying in the cupboard, Horatia was sitting with her cousin, Mrs. Dumbleton, and saying, "Augusta, you must stand by me and help me. I assure you I shall be happy. You know I have always wished for a quiet country life, and hoped to marry a clergyman."

"But you have not always wished to marry a country doctor," said Mrs. Dumbleton.

"He will do quite as well," said Horatia, eagerly. "I shall occupy myself with the poor people, with the schools. I shall escape from the hateful monotonous round of dismal gaiety."

"But this will be still more dull in a little while," said Mrs. Dumbleton.

"No," said Miss Berners, decisively; "because it is a natural and wholesome existence; the other is unnatural, and morbid, and exhausting. Augusta, you must help me, and persuade aunt Car to forgive me. For it is too late to prevent it any more, and—and—Henry sent off a note when the groom went to the station."

"Is it all settled?" cried Mrs. Dumbleton, very much relieved. She was always delighted when people decided things without her. "Then, of course, mamma must forgive you;" and the good-natured little woman went off, and knocked at Lady Whiston's door, and there was a great long long conference, and at last Horatia was summoned. And when she came out she was pale and exhausted, but triumphant. She and Mrs. Dumbleton had talked over the old lady between them. "Of course, you are going to do exactly as you like," says Lady Whiston, "but I suppose you know you have forfeited your place in society. I shall come and see you now and then, when I am not too busy. My consent is all nonsense. I must say I had hoped differently."

"But you will forgive her in time, mamma," pleaded Augusta.

"I cannot discharge Mr. Bonsey, if that is what she wants. Horatia! what could you want when you made this ridiculous arrangement?"

"Good-night, dearest, kindest aunt Car," said Horatia, suddenly, clasping the little old woman in her arms. "I can't tell you what I wanted, but I must keep to my decision. Good-night, Augusta."

What had she desired? Happiness, rest, quiet, a tranquil home, sympathy: and now all this was hers at last. She caught a glimpse of her glowing cheeks in the glass. She could hardly believe that bright and brilliant face was her own—her own old face, whose wan glances had met her for so many years.

One day, not long after the day I have been describing, Mrs. Dumbleton's little carriage was travelling along the road which leads from Dumbleton to Wandsworth; Augusta was driving the ponies, and

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Horatia was going in state to visit her new dominions. They roll on across the country roads, and lanes, and commons; through the western sunshine, through the warm sweet air, with a great dazzling vault overhead, a shining world all round about them. Horatia leans back too languid, too happy, too excited to talk. She lazily watches the crisp shadows that advance alongside—the nodding heads of the ponies, the trees and houses in the distance, the children and wayfarers who look up to see them pass. It is like a fairy tale, Horatia thinks—a princess driving along the road. And what will be the end of the story? They come to a cross-road at last, and then Augusta turns the ponies' heads, and they trot up a lane full of flickering shadow and sunshine. They stop suddenly at an iron gate in front of a Queen Anne brick house, with all the windows open, and growing ivy wreaths. And Horatia, with a start, says to herself, "So this is my home;" while Augusta points and says, "Here we are; doesn't it look nice?"

Behind the iron gate is a little garden, full of red and blue, margarites and geraniums; then three worn steps lead to the door with the old-fashioned cornice, over which a rose-tree is nailed. When Betty opened the door, they could see into the passage, and into the garden beyond, green and sunlight there as here in the lane.

Dr. Rich was not at home, Miss Rich was in the garden: Betty proposed to go and tell her; but Horatia quickly said, "No, we will go to her."

So the ladies got down. As Horatia crossed the threshold, she suddenly thought, with a thrill, how this was her new life, her future into which she was stepping. It had all lain concealed behind the door but a moment ago, and now it was revealed to her. It had begun from that minute when Betty admitted the strangers. The ladies swept through the little hall in their silk gowns, glanced with interest at the doctor's hats hanging upon their hooks, peeped into the little sitting-rooms on either side: the drawing-room with the horsehair sofa and mahogany chairs, the cottage piano, the worsted works of art, the three choristers hanging up on the wall, funny old china cups and bowls on the chimney, a check tablecloth, some flowers in a vulgar little vase on the table, a folding-door half open into an inner room.

"Is that another drawing-room?" Horatia asked.

"It ain't used much," says Betty. "It 'ave been Miss Rich's playroom. She does the linen there now, and keeps the preserves and groceries."

Horatia peeped in. There was no carpet; there was a wooden press, there was a glass door leading into the garden. It was not much of a place; but she thought how she would have chintz curtains, tripod tables, gilt gimcracks; and how pretty she could make it! Mrs. Dumbleton was quite enthusiastic.

"These are very nice rooms, Horatia, all except the furniture; with a few alterations they might be made quite pretty."

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But she was so used to her own trim lawns and hot-houses that she could find no praise for the garden, not even for the wide expanse beyond it. "What a view!" said Augusta. "Do you know, Ratia, I think it almost too, too beautiful."

"I like something smaller—something that it is no trouble to admire," said Horatia, drawing a deep breath.

"It is a pity the garden is so neglected," Augusta went on, looking up and down, and round about. Cabbages and roses were growing in friendly confusion, honeysuckle straggled up the old brick walls; parsley, mint, saffron, herbs of every sort, grew along the beds. Joe, the odd man, kept it in a certain trim; and the doctor sometimes ordered in a barrowful of flowers. It was not much of a place. Three straight walks led up to the low ivy wall at the end, where a little arbour had been put up, and where the ivy, and spiders'-webs, and honeysuckle, and various pretty creeping plants, tangled, and sprouted, and hung luxuriantly, as you see them at the end of a long summer. The entertainment is nearly over, and they lavishly fling out all their treasures, their garlands, their sweetness.

Under this pleasant, triumphal, autumnal arch Berta, in a broad hat and blue ribbons, was sitting with a novel; and looking up as she heard steps, she saw a tall woman coming towards her with a long silk trailing gown which swept the mint and parsley borders, and then she guessed in a moment that this was the future mistress of the little domain. What a beautiful lady! the heroine of the novel she had just been reading was not to be compared to her. What dark eyes! what bright glowing cheeks! What a charming smile!

Roberta, who had only seen her once before and who had thought her very alarming, and said herself that she hated fine ladies, was vanquished utterly for a moment. No wonder James was in love with this gracious creature, who was ready to give up all her state for him. She jumped up to meet her.

"I have come to see my new home," said Horatia, holding out her hand in a royal sort of way.

And Berta, blushing, took it timidly, and said—

"James told me. How I hope you will both be happy. Isn't it a dear old house?"

The old cistern at the back, the familiar chimney-stacks, the odd windows, the water-spout with the bird's nest, the worn steps where she had played when she was a child, the mouldy little arbour, had all dear old charms for Roberta, which naturally enough Horatia could not appreciate.

"I am afraid it is more for the sake of your brother, than for the merits of the house, that I mean to come and live here," said Horatia, smiling. "I want you to show me over the house, and to give us some tea. We came on purpose, when we thought he would be out. I think you know Mrs. Dumbleton."

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"We peeped into your store-room as we came along," said Mrs. Dumbleton, shaking hands, "and we want to see some more. I see you do not care much for your garden."

"I am so glad to have found you," continued Horatia; "but we meant to come in anyhow."

Roberta was rather bewildered by all this conversation, but most of all by the demand for tea. Betty was apt to be ill-tempered if anything was expected that did not come naturally in the course of every twenty-four hours. She began to feel as if her future sister-in-law was a fine lady again. Her heart sank within her. What had James done? What foolish thing had he done? However, she put the doubt away, and said, smiling, that she would be delighted to show them everything. There was not much to see. She pointed out St. Paul's, and the Abbey, and the Tower, and the new railway bridge close at hand: and then tripped back into the house before them, opened doors, showed them the surgery, the study, the drawing-room over again, the dining-room (there were some old carved chairs in the dining-room the ladies were pleased to approve of); she pointed out the convenient cupboards, but she felt a little awkward and sad as she led them here and there; she could not help feeling that their praises and dispraises were alike distasteful to her.

"What an old-fashioned paper!" said Mrs. Dumbleton. "Horatia, you ought to have white and gold, and matting on the floor, with Persian rugs. Yes; and we must do up this room."

"What a funny, dismal, little room," said Horatia, stepping in, and indeed almost entirely filling it with her voluminous skirts.

They had turned poor Roberta's store-room into a boudoir: they had built a bow window, they had sacrificed all the dear old chairs and tables, and now this was James's study that they were invading. It was very hard to bear. Berta only came in on great occasions—when she wanted money, when she said good-by, and when she dusted his books. It seemed almost sacred to her, and Betty the clumsy was never allowed to dust or to touch James's possessions. There was a little inner closet with a window where her brother used to let her sit when she was a child, as a great great treat, while he was at work. In the looking-glass over the chimney, she had, in former years, standing on tip-toe, looked at herself with a sort of guilty feeling of profanation; and now, instead of Roberta's demure, respectful peeping face, it reflected two flounced ladies poking about, staring at the shabby old furniture, turning over the books, talking and laughing.

"What a bachelor's house it is," said Horatia to Berta, without a notion of the wounds she and good-natured little Mrs. Dumbleton, who would not wilfully have pained any living creature, were inflicting; but women of thirty and upwards have a knack of snubbing and ruffling very young girls, and Berta was very young for twenty summers. She slipped away to the kitchen to order the tea, and to recover her temper. "Please,

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Betty, put it out in the dining-room; Dr. Rich would particularly wish it if he were at home," Berta said.

"Well, this is the fust time *I* ever heard of tea before dinner!" says Betty, with a bang of the tray upon the table; and Berta fled at the sound, and came back to find her guests upstairs on the bed-room landing, opening doors, and talking and laughing still.

"That is my brother's room—that is the spare room," Berta said.

"This one would make a nice boudoir," chirped Mrs. Dumbleton, thoughtlessly, looking into a pleasant chamber full of western sun-rays, with a window full of flowers.

"That is my room," said Berta, shortly, blushing up: "it has always been mine ever since I can remember."

"How pretty you have made it," said Horatia, who saw that she was vexed. "Shall we go down again?"

Berta made way for them to pass, and they sallied down into the drawing-room again.

But no tea was to be seen; so at Berta's request they went across the passage once more into the dining-room, and sure enough there it was. Betty had not vouchsafed a cloth, but had put out three cups on the red tablecover, three very small old-fashioned willow-patterned plates, knives and forks, a dish of thick bread and scraped butter, a plate of hard biscuits, a teapot, and a glass milk-jug. Three chairs were set, at which they took their places; and while Berta was busy pouring out the tea, Betty arrived with a huge black kitchen kettle to fill up the pot.

"Shall you want any more bread and butter cut, Miss Roberta?" she said; and poor Berta could not help seeing that Mrs. Dumbleton and Horatia glanced at each other, somewhat amused. They did not hear Berta's sigh as she sent Betty away. Berta sighed indeed, but then she forced herself to smile; and when James Rich rode up, a minute or two later, he came in to find a dream of old old days realized at last—a little happy family group in the old house, a beautiful woman looking up with bright gladness to greet him; Berta, evidently happy too, already adopted as a sister. He had not thought as he came slowly along the lane that it was to this that he was coming. He was touched to be able at last to welcome Horatia under his roof; and as he glanced at her beautiful face, as he realized the charm of her refinement, her soft breeding, he asked himself more than once if that was indeed his wife? His welcome was charming, his tender kindness melted and delighted Horatia, who had not experienced over much in her life. She was grateful, gentle, and happy, and cordial. When they drove off, the doctor was standing at the gate, as happy and as certain of coming happiness as she was herself.

I wonder would it have been different if Dr. Rich could have known that evening what was to come as days went by? It was yet time. If he could have been told the story of the next two years, would he have hesitated—have held back? I think not. He was a man so brave and

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so incautious that I imagine he would not have heeded the warning. I am sure he could have borne to know the end of it all—and could have heard of trouble to come; with that same courage with which he endured it when it fell upon him.

Horatia had determined to marry her husband against all warnings: except Mr. and Mrs. Dumbleton there was no one in favour of the match. But she would not listen to any objections. Her aunt's laments, angry reproaches, exclamations of horror, shakes of head, nods, groans, sighs, grand and agitated relations who drove up from town to put a stop to the match, and to crush the presumptuous doctor under their horses' hoofs, if need be—nothing could prevent her from doing as she liked.

"I am beginning to see that this is not at all a good match for you," the doctor said one day. "Horatia, do you understand that you will have to be really a woman of the working classes? You will have to do as Berta does—for instance, sew and stitch, and make a pudding on occasions, and I don't know what else."

"I am older than Berta, and have been brought up differently," said Horatia, smiling. "I assure you it is a popular fallacy to think that households do not go on very well with a little judicious supervision. The mistress is not necessarily always in and out of the kitchen.—Where are you going to?"—she went on, glad to change the subject, which was one she hated.

"I am going to see a very sick man who lives three miles off. Caton is attending him, and he has sent for me."

"I do not much fancy that Mr. Caton," said Horatia. "I wish you would beg your friends not to congratulate me without knowing me."

"Caton is a very good young fellow—he is a rough diamond," said the doctor. "He saved my life once when I had the small-pox, so you must forgive him for that and other reasons, Horatia." And he nodded, and went away more in love than ever.

When Mr. Caton, whom he met presently, began talking over the marriage, with as many misgivings as the grandest of Horatia's great aunts, James Rich stopped him almost angrily.

"What do you mean about keeping in one's own class of life? I suppose a gentleman is the equal of any lady; and if she does not object to marry me, I cannot see what concern it is of yours. Men or women are none the worse in any station of life for a good education, and for having some idea of what is happening out of one particular narrow sphere."

"Look at your sister," began Mr. Caton.

"My sister will be all the better for learning a little more of the world," said Dr. Rich; "she is too fond of housekeeping." But he knew very well what Mr. Caton thought of Roberta.

Six weeks went by—very happily for James and Horatia, very slowly for poor Berta, who all the while fought a heroic little battle

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which nobody suspected: she was fighting with herself, poor child! and got *all* the blows.

Andrew Caton, indeed, may have guessed that she was not happy; and one day he came up to condole with her, but he had put on such a very long sympathetic face for the occasion that Berta burst out laughing, and would not say a word on the subject. Much less would she understand when he tried to speak of what was much nearer his heart. The little maiden gently parried and avoided all sentiment. At the very bottom of *her* heart I think she liked him, and meant some day to make him happy; but at twenty life is long, the horizon stretches away far, far into the distance. There is plenty of time to love, to live, to hate, to come, to go. Older people are more impatient, and hurry things on. Young folks don't mind waiting; at least, so it has seemed to me. Roberta did not mind much, only sometimes, when a sort of jealous loneliness came wearily weighing upon her. She could not help feeling that she was changed somehow, that life was not the placid progress she had always imagined; wishes, terrors, fancies, were crowding round her more and more thickly every day. She began to see what was going on all about her, to understand what was passing in other people's minds, as she never had done in her life before.

As the day approached which was settled for James's marriage, Berta became more sad. Her wistful eyes constantly crossed his, she took to following him about; she would come out to meet him on his return, and creep gently in his room when he was smoking, or at work. The night before his marriage she whispered a little sobbing blessing in his ear.

"My dearest Berta," he said, "let us pray that we may all be happy—don't cry, you silly child,—you do not think that anyone or anything can ever change my love for you."

James was not demonstrative; he had never said so much before, and Berta slept sounder than she had slept for weeks.

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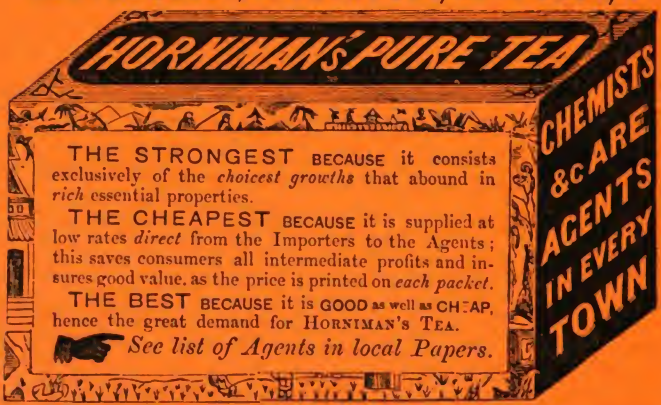

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THE

CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

OCTOBER, 1863.

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THE

CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

OCTOBER, 1863.

The Small House at Allington.

CHAPTER XL.

Preparations for the Wedding.

THE fourteenth of February was finally settled as the day on which Mr. Crosbie was to be made the happiest of men. A later day had been at first named, the twenty-seventh or twenty-eighth having been suggested as an improvement over the first week in March; but Lady Amelia had been frightened by Crosbie's behaviour on that Sunday evening, and had made the countess understand that there should be no unnecessary delay. "He doesn't scruple at that kind of thing," Lady Amelia had said in one of her letters, showing perhaps less trust in the potency of her own rank than might have been expected from her. The countess, however, had agreed with her, and

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when Crosbie received from his mother-in-law a very affectionate epistle setting forth all the reasons which would make the fourteenth so much more convenient a day than the twenty-eighth, he was unable to invent an excuse for not being made happy a fortnight earlier than the time named in the bargain. His first impulse had been against yielding, arising from some feeling which made him think that more than the bargain ought not to be exacted. But what was the use to him of quarrelling? What the use, at least, of quarrelling just then? He believed that he could more easily enfranchise himself from the De Courcy tyranny when he should be once married than he could do now. When Lady Alexandrina should be his own he would let her know that he intended to be her master. If in doing so it would be necessary that he should divide himself altogether from the De Courcys, such division should be made. At the present moment he would yield to them, at any rate in this matter. And so the fourteenth of February was fixed for the marriage.

In the second week in January Alexandrina came up to look after her things; or, in more noble language, to fit herself with becoming bridal appanages. As she could not properly do all this work alone, or even under the surveillance and with the assistance of a sister, Lady De Courcy was to come up also. But Alexandrina came first, remaining with her sister in St. John's Wood till the countess should arrive. The countess had never yet condescended to accept of her son-in-law's hospitality, but always went to the cold, comfortless house in Portman Square,—the house which had been the De Courcy town family mansion for many years, and which the countess would long since have willingly exchanged for some abode on the other side of Oxford Street; but the earl had been obdurate; his clubs and certain lodgings which he had occasionally been wont to occupy were on the right side of Oxford Street; why should he change his old family residence? So the countess was coming up to Portman Square, not having been even asked on this occasion to St. John's Wood.

"Don't you think we'd better," Mr. Gazebee had said to his wife, almost trembling at the renewal of his own proposition.

"I think not, my dear," Lady Amelia had answered. "Mamma is not very particular; but there are little things, you know——"

"Oh, yes, of course," said Mr. Gazebee; and then the conversation had been dropped. He would most willingly have entertained his august mother-in-law during her visit to the metropolis, and yet her presence in his house would have made him miserable as long as she remained there.

But for a week Alexandrina sojourned under Mr. Gazebee's roof, during which time Crosbie was made happy with all the delights of an expectant bridegroom. Of course he was given to understand that he was to dine at the Gazebees' every day, and spend all his evenings there; and, under the circumstances, he had no excuse for not doing so. Indeed, at the present moment, his hours would otherwise have hung heavily enough upon his hands. In spite of his bold resolution with reference to his eye, and his intention not to be debarred from the pleasures of society by the

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marks of the late combat, he had not, since that occurrence, frequented his club very closely; and though London was now again becoming fairly full, he did not find himself going out so much as had been his wont. The brilliance of his coming marriage did not seem to have added much to his popularity; in fact, the world,—his world,—was beginning to look coldly at him. Therefore that daily attendance at St. John's Wood was not felt to be so irksome as might have been expected.

A residence had been taken for the couple in a very fashionable row of buildings abutting upon the Bayswater-road, called Princess Royal Crescent. The house was quite new, and the street being unfinished had about it a strong smell of mortar, and a general aspect of builders' poles and brickbats; but nevertheless, it was acknowledged to be a quite correct locality. From one end of the crescent a corner of Hyde Park could be seen, and the other abutted on a very handsome terrace indeed, in which lived an ambassador,—from South America,—a few bankers' senior clerks, and a peer of the realm. We know how vile is the sound of Baker Street, and how absolutely foul to the polite ear is the name of Fitzroy Square. The houses, however, in those purlieus are substantial, warm, and of good size. The house in Princess Royal Crescent was certainly not substantial, for in these days substantially-built houses do not pay. It could hardly have been warm, for, to speak the truth, it was even yet not finished throughout; and as for the size, though the drawing-room was a noble apartment, consisting of a section of the whole house, with a corner cut out for the staircase, it was very much cramped in its other parts, and was made like a cherub, in this respect, that it had no rear belonging to it. "But if you have no private fortune of your own, you cannot have everything," as the countess observed when Crosbie objected to the house because a closet under the kitchen-stairs was to be assigned to him as his own dressing-room.

When the question of the house was first debated Lady Amelia had been anxious that St. John's Wood should be selected as the site, but to this Crosbie had positively objected.

"I think you don't like St. John's Wood," Lady Amelia had said to him somewhat sternly, thinking to awe him into a declaration that he entertained no general enmity to the neighbourhood. But Crosbie was not weak enough for this.

"No; I do not," he said. "I have always disliked it. It amounts to a prejudice, I daresay. But if I were made to live here I am convinced I should cut my throat in the first six months."

Lady Amelia had then drawn herself up, declaring her sorrow that her house should be so hateful to him.

"Oh, dear, no," said he. "I like it very much for you, and enjoy coming here of all things. I speak only of the effect which living here myself would have upon me."

Lady Amelia was quite clever enough to understand it all; but she had her sister's interest at heart, and therefore persevered in her affec-

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tionate solicitude for her brother-in-law, giving up that point as to St. John's Wood. Crosbie himself had wished to go to one of the new Pimlico squares, down near Vauxhall Bridge and the river, actuated chiefly by consideration of the enormous distance lying between that locality and the northern region in which Lady Amelia lived; but to this Lady Alexandrina had objected strongly. If, indeed, they could have achieved Eaton Square, or a street leading out of Eaton Square,—if they could have crept on to the hem of the skirt of Belgravia,—the bride would have been delighted. And at first she was very nearly being taken in with the idea that such was the proposal made to her. Her geographical knowledge of Pimlico had not been perfect, and she had nearly fallen into a fatal error. But a friend had kindly intervened. "For heaven's sake, my dear, don't let him take you anywhere beyond Eccleston Square!" had been exclaimed to her in dismay by a faithful married friend. Thus warned, Alexandrina had been firm, and now their tent was to be pitched in Princess Royal Crescent, from one end of which the Hyde Park may be seen.

The furniture had been ordered chiefly under the inspection, and by the experience, of the Lady Amelia. Crosbie had satisfied himself by declaring that she at any rate could get the things cheaper than he could buy them, and that he had no taste for such employment. Nevertheless, he had felt that he was being made subject to tyranny and brought under the thumb of subjection. He could not go cordially into this matter of beds and chairs, and, therefore, at last deputed the whole matter to the De Courcy faction. And for this there was another reason, not hitherto mentioned. Mr. Mortimer Gazebee was finding the money with which all the furniture was being bought. He, with an honest but almost unintelligible zeal for the De Courcy family, had tied up every shilling on which he could lay his hand as belonging to Crosbie, in the interest of Lady Alexandrina. He had gone to work for her, scraping here and arranging there, strapping the new husband down upon the grindstone of his matrimonial settlement, as though the future bread of his, Gazebee's, own children were dependent on the validity of his legal workmanship. And for this he was not to receive a penny, or gain any advantage, immediate or ulterior. It came from his zeal,—his zeal for the coronet which Lord De Courcy wore. According to his mind an earl and an earl's belongings were entitled to such zeal. It was the theory in which he had been educated, and amounted to a worship which, unconsciously, he practised. Personally, he disliked Lord De Courcy, who ill-treated him. He knew that the earl was a heartless, cruel, bad man. But as an earl he was entitled to an amount of service which no commoner could have commanded from Mr. Gazebee. Mr. Gazebee, having thus tied up all the available funds in favour of Lady Alexandrina's seemingly expected widowhood, was himself providing the money with which the new house was to be furnished. "You can pay me a hundred and fifty a year with four per cent. till it is liquidated," he had said to Crosbie; and Crosbie

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had assented with a grunt. Hitherto, though he had lived in London expensively, and as a man of fashion, he had never owed any one anything. He was now to begin that career of owing. But when a clerk in a public office marries an earl's daughter, he cannot expect to have everything his own way.

Lady Amelia had bought the ordinary furniture,—the beds, the stair-carpets, the washing-stands, and the kitchen things. Gazebee had got a bargain of the dinner-table and sideboard. But Lady Alexandrina herself was to come up with reference to the appurtenances of the drawing-room. It was with reference to matters of costume that the countess intended to lend her assistance,—matters of costume as to which the bill could not be sent in to Gazebee, and be paid for by him with five per cent. duly charged against the bridegroom. The bridal trousseau must be produced by De Courcy's means, and, therefore, it was necessary that the countess herself should come upon the scene. "I will have no bills, d'ye hear?" snarled the earl, gnashing and snapping upon his words with one specially ugly black tooth. "I won't have any bills about this affair." And yet he made no offer of ready money. It was very necessary under such circumstances that the countess herself should come upon the scene. An ambiguous hint had been conveyed to Mr. Gazebee, during a visit of business which he had lately made to Courcy Castle, that the milliner's bills might as well be pinned on to those of the furniture-makers, the crockery-mongers and the like. The countess, putting it in her own way, had gently suggested that the fashion of the thing had changed lately, and that such an arrangement was considered to be the proper thing among people who lived really in the world. But Gazebee was a clear-headed, honest man; and he knew the countess. He did not think that such an arrangement could be made on the present occasion. Whereupon the countess pushed her suggestion no further, but made up her mind that she must come up to London herself.

It was pleasant to see the Ladies Amelia and Alexandrina, as they sat within a vast emporium of carpets in Bond Street, asking questions of the four men who were waiting upon them, putting their heads together and whispering, calculating accurately as to extra twopences a yard, and occasioning as much trouble as it was possible for them to give. It was pleasant because they managed their large hoops cleverly among the huge rolls of carpets, because they were enjoying themselves thoroughly, and taking to themselves the homage of the men as clearly their due. But it was not so pleasant to look at Crosbie, who was fidgeting to get away to his office, to whom no power of choosing in the matter was really given, and whom the men regarded as being altogether supernumerary. The ladies had promised to be at the shop by half-past ten, so that Crosbie should reach his office at eleven,—or a little after. But it was nearly eleven before they left the Gazebee residence, and it was very evident that half-an-hour among the carpets would be by no means sufficient. It seemed as though miles upon miles of gorgeous colouring were unrolled

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before them; and then when any pattern was regarded as at all practicable, it was unrolled backwards and forwards till a room was nearly covered by it. Crosbie felt for the men who were hauling about the huge heaps of material; but Lady Amelia sat as composed as though it were her duty to inspect every yard of stuff in the warehouse. "I think we'll look at that one at the bottom again." Then the men went to work and removed a mountain. "No, my dear, that green in the scroll-work won't do. It would fly directly, if any hot water were spilt." The man smiling ineffably, declared that that particular green never flew anywhere. But Lady Amelia paid no attention to him, and the carpet for which the mountain had been removed became part of another mountain.

"That might do," said Alexandrina, gazing upon a magnificent crimson ground through which rivers of yellow meandered, carrying with them in their streams an infinity of blue flowers. And as she spoke she held her head gracefully on one side, and looked down upon the carpet doubtingly. Lady Amelia poked it with her parasol as though to test its durability, and whispered something about yellows showing the dirt. Crosbie took out his watch and groaned.

"It's a superb carpet, my lady, and about the newest thing we have. We put down four hundred and fifty yards of it for the Duchess of South Wales, at Cwddglwlch Castle, only last month. Nobody has had it since, for it has not been in stock." Whereupon Lady Amelia again poked it, and then got up and walked upon it. Lady Alexandrina held her head a little more on one side.

"Five and three?" said Lady Amelia.

"Oh, no, my lady; five and seven; and the cheapest carpet we have in the house. There is twopence a yard more in the colour; there is, indeed."

"And the discount?" asked Lady Amelia.

"Two and a half," my lady.

"Oh, dear, no," said Lady Amelia. "I always have five per cent. for immediate payment;—quite immediate, you know." Upon which the man declared the question must be referred to his master. Two and a half was the rule of the house. Crosbie, who had been looking out of the window, said that upon his honour he couldn't wait any longer.

"And what do you think of it, Adolphus?" asked Alexandrina.

"Think of what?"

"Of the carpet,—this one, you know!"

"Oh—what do I think of the carpet? I don't think I quite like all these yellow bands; and isn't it too red? I should have thought something brown with a small pattern would have been better. But, upon my word, I don't much care."

"Of course he doesn't," said Lady Amelia. Then the two ladies put their heads together for another five minutes, and the carpet was chosen,—subject to that question of the discount. "And now about the rug," said Lady Amelia. But here Crosbie rebelled, and insisted that he must leave them and go to his office. "You can't want me about the rug," he

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said. "Well, perhaps not," said Lady Amelia. But it was manifest that Alexandrina did not approve of being thus left by her senior attendant.

The same thing happened in Oxford Street with reference to the chairs and sofas, and Crosbie began to wish that he were settled, even though he should have to dress himself in the closet below the kitchen-stairs. He was learning to hate the whole household in St. John's Wood, and almost all that belonged to it. He was introduced there to little family economies of which hitherto he had known nothing, and which were disgusting to him, and the necessity for which was especially explained to him. It was to men placed as he was about to place himself that these economies were so vitally essential,—to men who with limited means had to maintain a decorous outward face towards the fashionable world. Ample supplies of butchers' meat and unlimited washing-bills might be very well upon fifteen hundred a year to those who went out but seldom, and who could use the first cab that came to hand when they did go out. But there were certain things that Lady Alexandrina must do, and therefore the strictest household economy became necessary. Would Lily Dale have required the use of a carriage, got up to look as though it were private, at the expense of her husband's beefsteaks and clean shirts? That question and others of that nature were asked by Crosbie within his own mind, not unfrequently.

But, nevertheless, he tried to love Alexandrina, or rather to persuade himself that he loved her. If he could only get her away from the De Courcy faction, and especially from the Gazebee branch of it, he would break her of all that. He would teach her to sit triumphantly in a street cab, and to cater for her table with a plentiful hand. Teach her!—at some age over thirty; and with such careful training as she had already received! Did he intend to forbid her ever again to see her relations, ever to go to St. John's Wood, or to correspond with the countess and Lady Margaretta? Teach her, indeed! Had he yet to learn that he could not wash a blackamoor white?—that he could not have done so even had he himself been well adapted for the attempt, whereas he was in truth nearly as ill adapted as a man might be? But who could pity him? Lily, whom he might have had in his bosom, would have been no blackamoor!

Then came the time of Lady De Courcy's visit to town, and Alexandrina moved herself off to Portman Square. There was some apparent comfort in this to Crosbie, for he would thereby be saved from those daily dreary journeys up to the north-west. I may say that he positively hated that windy corner near the church, round which he had to walk in getting to the Gazebee residence, and that he hated the lamp which guided him to the door, and the very door itself. This stood buried as it were in a wall, and opened on to a narrow passage which ran across a so-called garden, or front yard, containing on each side two iron receptacles for geraniums, painted to look like Palissy ware, and a naked female on a pedestal. No spot in London was, as he thought, so cold as the bit of pavement immediately in front of that door. And there he would be

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kept five, ten, fifteen minutes, as he declared,—though I believe in my heart that the time never exceeded three,—while Richard was putting off the trappings of his work and putting on the trappings of his grandeur.

If people would only have their doors opened to you by such assistance as may come most easily and naturally to the work! I stood lately for some minutes on a Tuesday afternoon at a gallant portal, and as I waxed impatient a pretty maiden came and opened it. She was a pretty maiden, though her hands and face and apron told tales of the fire-grates. "Laws, sir," she said, "the visitors' day is Wednesday; and if you would come then, there would be the man in livery!" She took my card with the corner of her apron, and did just as well as the man in livery; but what would have happened to her had her little speech been overheard by her mistress?

Crosbie hated the house in St. John's Wood, and therefore the coming of the countess was a relief to him. Portman Square was easily to be reached, and the hospitalities of the countess would not be pressed upon him so strongly as those of the Gazebees. When he first called he was shown into the great family dining-room, which looked out towards the back of the house. The front windows were, of course, closed, as the family was not supposed to be in London. Here he remained in the room for some quarter of an hour, and then the countess descended upon him in all her grandeur. Perhaps he had never before seen her so grand. Her dress was very large, and rustled through the broad doorway, as if demanding even a broader passage. She had on a wonder of a bonnet, and a velvet mantle that was nearly as expansive as her petticoats. She threw her head a little back as she accosted him, and he instantly perceived that he was enveloped in the fumes of an affectionate but somewhat contemptuous patronage. In old days he had liked the countess, because her manner to him had always been flattering. In his intercourse with her he had been able to feel that he gave quite as much as he got, and that the countess was aware of the fact. In all the circumstances of their acquaintance the ascendancy had been with him, and therefore the acquaintance had been a pleasant one. The countess had been a good-natured, agreeable woman, whose rank and position had made her house pleasant to him; and therefore he had consented to shine upon her with such light as he had to give. Why was it that the matter was reversed, now that there was so much stronger a cause for good feeling between them? He knew that there was such change, and with bitter internal upbraidings he acknowledged to himself that this woman was getting the mastery over him. As the friend of the countess he had been a great man in her eyes;—in all her little words and looks she had acknowledged his power; but now, as her son-in-law, he was to become a very little man,—such as was Mortimer Gazebee!

"My dear Adolphus," she said, taking both his hands, "the day is coming very near now; is it not?"

"Very near, indeed," he said.

"Yes, it is very near. I hope you feel yourself a happy man."

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"Oh, yes, that's of course."

"It ought to be. Speaking very seriously, I mean that it ought to be a matter of course. She is everything that a man should desire in a wife. I am not alluding now to her rank, though of course you feel what a great advantage she gives you in this respect."

Crosbie muttered something as to his consciousness of having drawn a prize in the lottery; but he so muttered it as not to convey to the lady's ears a proper sense of his dependent gratitude. "I know of no man more fortunate than you have been," she continued; "and I hope that my dear girl will find that you are fully aware that it is so. I think that she is looking rather fagged. You have allowed her to do more than was good for her in the way of shopping."

"She has done a good deal, certainly," said Crosbie.

"She is so little used to anything of that kind! But of course, as things have turned out, it was necessary that she should see to these things herself."

"I rather think she liked it," said Crosbie.

"I believe she will always like doing her duty. We are just going now to Madame Millefranc's, to see some silks;—perhaps you would wish to go with us?"

Just at this moment Alexandrina came into the room, and looked as though she were in all respects a smaller edition of her mother. They were both well-grown women, with handsome, large figures, and a certain air about them which answered almost for beauty. As to the countess, her face, on close inspection, bore, as it was entitled to do, deep signs of age; but she so managed her face that any such close inspection was never made; and her general appearance for her time of life was certainly good. Very little more than this could be said in favour of her daughter.

"Oh, dear, no, mamma," she said, having heard her mother's last words. "He's the worst person in a shop in the world. He likes nothing, and dislikes nothing. Do you, Adolphus?"

"Indeed I do. I like all the cheap things, and dislike all the dear things."

"Then you certainly shall not go with us to Madame Millefranc's," said Alexandrina.

"It would not matter to him there, you know, my dear," said the countess, thinking perhaps of the suggestion she had lately made to Mr. Gazebee.

On this occasion Crosbie managed to escape, simply promising to return to Portman Square in the evening after dinner. "By-the-by, Adolphus," said the countess, as he handed her into the hired carriage which stood at the door, "I wish you would go to Lambert's, on Ludgate Hill, for me. He has had a bracelet of mine for nearly three months. Do, there's a good creature. Get it if you can, and bring it up this evening."

Crosbie, as he made his way back to his office, swore that he would not do the bidding of the countess. He would not trudge off into the city after her trinkets. But at five o'clock, when he left his office, he did go

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there. He apologized to himself by saying that he had nothing else to do, and bethought himself that at the present moment his lady mother-in-law's smiles might be more convenient than her frowns. So he went to Lambert's, on Ludgate Hill, and there learned that the bracelet had been sent down to Courcy Castle full two months since.

After that he dined at his club, at Sebright's. He dined alone, sitting by no means in bliss with his half-pint of sherry on the table before him. A man now and then came up and spoke to him, one a few words, and another a few, and two or three congratulated him as to his marriage; but the club was not the same thing to him as it had formerly been. He did not stand in the centre of the rug, speaking indifferently to all or any around him, ready with his joke, and loudly on the alert with the last news of the day. How easy it is to be seen when any man has fallen from his pride of place, though the altitude was ever so small, and the fall ever so slight! Where is the man who can endure such a fall without showing it in his face, in his voice, in his step, and in every motion of every limb? Crosbie knew that he had fallen, and showed that he knew it by the manner in which he eat his mutton-chop.

At half-past eight he was again in Portman Square, and found the two ladies crowding over a small fire in a small back drawing-room. The furniture was all covered with brown holland, and the place had about it that cold comfortless feeling which uninhabited rooms always produce. Crosbie, as he had walked from the club up to Portman Square, had indulged in some serious thoughts. The kind of life which he had hitherto led had certainly passed away from him. He could never again be the pet of a club, or indulged as one to whom all good things were to be given without any labour at earning them on his own part. Such for some years had been his good fortune, but such could be his good fortune no longer. Was there anything within his reach which he might take in lieu of that which he had lost? He might still be victorious at his office, having more capacity for such victory than others around him. But such success alone would hardly suffice for him. Then he considered whether he might not even yet be happy in his own home, —whether Alexandrina, when separated from her mother, might not become such a wife as he could love. Nothing softens a man's feelings so much as failure, or makes him turn so anxiously to an idea of home as buffetings from those he meets abroad. He had abandoned Lily because his outer world had seemed to him too bright to be deserted. He would endeavour to supply her place with Alexandrina, because his outer world had seemed to him too harsh to be supported. Alas! alas! a man cannot so easily repent of his sins, and wash himself white from their stains!

When he entered the room the two ladies were sitting over the fire, as I have stated, and Crosbie could immediately perceive that the spirit of the countess was not serene. In fact there had been a few words between the mother and child on that matter of the trousseau, and Alexandrina had plainly told her mother that if she were to be married

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at all, she would be married with such garments belonging to her as were fitting for an earl's daughter. It was in vain that her mother had explained, with many circumlocutional phrases, that the fitness in this respect should be accommodated rather to the plebeian husband than to the noble parent. Alexandrina had been very firm, and had insisted on her rights, giving the countess to understand that if her orders for finery were not complied with, she would return as a spinster to Courcy, and prepare herself for partnership with Rosina.

"My dear," said the countess, piteously, "you can have no idea of what I shall have to go through with your father. And, of course, you could get all these things afterwards."

"Papa has no right to treat me in such a way. And if he would not give me any money himself, he should have let me have some of my own."

"Ah, my dear, that was Mr. Gazebee's fault."

"I don't care whose fault it was. It certainly was not mine. I won't have him to tell me"—him was intended to signify Adolphus Crosbie—"that he had to pay for my wedding-clothes."

"Of course not that, my dear."

"No; nor yet for the things which I wanted immediately. I'd much rather go and tell him at once that the marriage must be put off."

Alexandrina of course carried her point, the countess reflecting with a maternal devotion equal almost to that of the pelican, that the earl could not do more than kill her. So the things were ordered as Alexandrina chose to order them, and the countess desired that the bills might be sent in to Mr. Gazebee. Much self-devotion had been displayed by the mother, but the mother thought that none had been displayed by the daughter, and therefore she had been very cross with Alexandrina.

Crosbie, taking a chair, sat himself between them, and in a very good-humoured tone explained the little affair of the bracelet. "Your ladyship's memory must have played you false," said he, with a smile.

"My memory is very good," said the countess; "very good indeed. If Twitch got it, and didn't tell me, that was not my fault." Twitch was her ladyship's lady's-maid. Crosbie, seeing how the land lay, said nothing more about the bracelet.

After a minute or two he put out his hand to take that of Alexandrina. They were to be married now in a week or two, and such a sign of love might have been allowed to him, even in the presence of the bride's mother. He did succeed in getting hold of her fingers, but found in them none of the softness of a response. "Don't," said Lady Alexandrina, withdrawing her hand; and the tone of her voice as she spoke the word was not sweet to his ears. He remembered at the moment a certain scene which took place one evening at the little bridge at Allington, and Lily's voice, and Lily's words, and Lily's passion, as he caressed her: "Oh, my love, my love, my love!"

"My dear," said the countess, "they know how tired I am. I wonder whether they are going to give us any tea." Whereupon Crosbie rang

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the bell, and, on resuming his chair, moved it a little farther away from his lady-love.

Presently the tea was brought to them by the housekeeper's assistant, who did not appear to have made herself very smart for the occasion, and Crosbie thought that he was de trop. This, however, was a mistake on his part. As he had been admitted into the family, such little matters were no longer subject of care. Two or three months since, the countess would have fainted at the idea of such a domestic appearing with a tea-tray before Mr. Crosbie. Now, however, she was utterly indifferent to any such consideration. Crosbie was to be admitted into the family, thereby becoming entitled to certain privileges,—and thereby also becoming subject to certain domestic drawbacks. In Mrs. Dale's little household there had been no rising to grandeur; but then, also, there had never been any bathos of dirt. Of this also Crosbie thought as he sat with his tea in his hand.

He soon, however, got himself away. When he rose to go Alexandrina also rose, and he was permitted to press his nose against her cheek-bone by way of a salute.

"Good-night, Adolphus," said the countess, putting out her hand to him. "But stop a minute; I know there is something I want you to do for me. But you will look in as you go to your office to-morrow morning."

CHAPTER XLI.

Domestic Troubles.

When Crosbie was making his ineffectual inquiry after Lady De Courcy's bracelet at Lambert's, John Eames was in the act of entering Mrs. Roper's front door in Burton Crescent.

"Oh, John, where's Mr. Cradell?" were the first words which greeted him, and they were spoken by the divine Amelia. Now, in her usual practice of life, Amelia did not interest herself much as to the whereabouts of Mr. Cradell.

"Where's Caudle?" said Eames, repeating the question. "Upon my word, I don't know. I walked to the office with him, but I haven't seen him since. We don't sit in the same room, you know."

"John!" and then she stopped.

"What's up now?" said John.

"John! That woman's off and left her husband. As sure as your name's John Eames, that foolish fellow has gone off with her."

"What, Caudle? I don't believe it."

"She went out of this house at two o'clock in the afternoon, and has never been back since." That, certainly, was only four hours from the present time, and such an absence from home in the middle of the day was but weak evidence on which to charge a married woman with the

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great sin of running off with a lover. This Amelia felt, and therefore she went on to explain. "He's there upstairs in the drawing-room, the very picture of disconsolateness."

"Who,—Caudle?"

"Lupex is. He's been drinking a little, I'm afraid; but he's very unhappy, indeed. He had an appointment to meet his wife here at four o'clock, and when he came he found her gone. He rushed up into their room, and now he says she has broken open a box he had and taken off all his money."

"But he never had any money."

"He paid mother some the day before yesterday."

"That's just the reason he shouldn't have any to-day."

"She certainly has taken things she wouldn't have taken if she'd merely gone out shopping or anything like that, for I've been up in the room and looked about it. She'd three necklaces. They weren't much account; but she must have them all on, or else have got them in her pocket."

"Caudle has never gone off with her in that way. He may be a fool——"

"Oh, he is, you know. I've never seen such a fool about a woman as he has been."

"But he wouldn't be a party to stealing a lot of trumpery trinkets, or taking her husband's money. Indeed, I don't think he has anything to do with it." Then Eames thought over the circumstances of the day, and remembered that he had certainly not seen Cradell since the morning. It was that public servant's practice to saunter into Eames's room in the middle of the day, and there consume bread and cheese and beer,—in spite of an assertion which Johnny had once made as to crumbs of biscuit bathed in ink. But on this special day he had not done so. "I can't think he has been such a fool as that," said Johnny.

"But he has," said Amelia. "It's dinner-time now, and where is he? Had he any money left, Johnny?"

So interrogated Eames disclosed a secret confided to him by his friend which no other circumstances would have succeeded in dragging from his breast.

"She borrowed twelve pounds from him about a fortnight since, immediately after quarter-day. And she owed him money, too, before that."

"Oh, what a soft!" exclaimed Amelia; "and he hasn't paid mother a shilling for the last two months!"

"It was his money, perhaps, that Mrs. Roper got from Lupex the day before yesterday. If so, it comes to the same thing as far as she is concerned, you know."

"And what are we to do now?" said Amelia, as she went before her lover upstairs. "Oh, John, what will become of me if ever you serve me in that way? What should I do if you were to go off with another lady?"

"Lupex hasn't gone off," said Eames, who hardly knew what to say

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when the matter was brought before him with so closely personal a reference.

"But it's the same thing," said Amelia. "Hearts is divided. Hearts that have been joined together ought never to be divided; ought they?" And then she hung upon his arm just as they got to the drawing-room door.

"Hearts and darts are all my eye," said Johnny. "My belief is that a man had better never marry at all. How d'you do, Mr. Lupex? Is anything the matter?"

Mr. Lupex was seated on a chair in the middle of the room, and was leaning with his head over the back of it. So despondent was he in his attitude that his head would have fallen off and rolled on to the floor had it followed the course which its owner seemed to intend that it should take. His hands hung down also along the back legs of the chair, till his fingers almost touched the ground, and altogether his appearance was pendent, drooping, and wobegone. Miss Spruce was seated in one corner of the room, with her hands folded in her lap before her, and Mrs. Roper was standing on the rug with a look of severe virtue on her brow,—of virtue which, to judge by its appearance, was very severe. Nor was its severity intended to be exercised solely against Mrs. Lupex. Mrs. Roper was becoming very tired of Mr. Lupex also, and would not have been unhappy if he also had run away,—leaving behind him so much of his property as would have paid his bill.

Mr. Lupex did not stir when first addresssd by John Eames, but a certain convulsive movement was to be seen on the back of his head, indicating that this new arrival in the drawing-room had produced a fresh accession of agony. The chair, too, quivered under him, and his fingers stretched themselves nearer to the ground and shook themselves.

"Mr. Lupex, we're going to dinner immediately," said Mrs. Roper. "Mr. Eames, where is your friend, Mr. Cradell?"

"Upon my word I don't know," said Eames.

"But I know," said Lupex, jumping up and standing at his full height, while he knocked down the chair which had lately supported him. "The traitor to domestic bliss! I know. And wherever he is, he has that false woman in his arms. Would he were here!" And as he expressed the last wish he went through a motion with his hands and arms which seemed intended to signify that if that unfortunate young man were in the company he would pull him in pieces and double him up, and pack him close, and then despatch his remains off, through infinite space, to the Prince of Darkness. "Traitor," he exclaimed, as he finished the process. "False traitor! Foul traitor! And she too!" Then, as he thought of this softer side of the subject, he prepared himself to relapse again on to the chair. Finding it on the ground he had to pick it up. He did pick it up, and once more flung away his head over the back of it, and stretched his finger-nails almost down to the carpet.

"James," said Mrs. Roper to her son, who was now in the room,

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"I think you'd better stay with Mr. Lupex while we are at dinner. Come, Miss Spruce, I'm very sorry that you should be annoyed by this kind of thing."

"It don't hurt me," said Miss Spruce, preparing to leave the room. "I'm only an old woman."

"Annoyed!" said Lupex, raising himself again from his chair, not perhaps altogether disposed to remain upstairs while the dinner, for which it was intended that he should some day pay, was being eaten below. "Annoyed! It is a profound sorrow to me that any lady should be annoyed by my misfortunes. As regards Miss Spruce, I look upon her character with profound veneration."

"You needn't mind me; I'm only an old woman," said Miss Spruce.

"But, by heavens, I do mind!" exclaimed Lupex; and hurrying forward he seized Miss Spruce by the hand. "I shall always regard age as entitled——" But the special privileges which Mr. Lupex would have accorded to age were never made known to the inhabitants of Mrs. Roper's boarding-house, for the door of the room was again opened at this moment, and Mr. Cradell entered.

"Here you are, old fellow, to answer for yourself," said Eames.

Cradell, who had heard something as he came in at the front door, but had not heard that Lupex was in the drawing-room, made a slight start backwards when he saw that gentleman's face. "Upon my word and honour," he began;—but he was able to carry his speech no further. Lupex, dropping the hand of the elderly lady whom he reverenced, was upon him in an instant, and Cradell was shaking beneath his grasp like an aspen leaf,—or rather not like an aspen leaf, unless an aspen leaf when shaken is to be seen with its eyes shut, its mouth open, and its tongue hanging out.

"Come, I say," said Eames, stepping forward to his friend's assistance; "this won't do at all, Mr. Lupex. You've been drinking. You'd better wait till to-morrow morning, and speak to Cradell then."

"To-morrow morning, viper," shouted Lupex, still holding his prey, but looking back at Eames over his shoulder. Who the viper was had not been clearly indicated. "When will he restore to me my wife? When will he restore to me my honour?"

"Upon-on-on-on my—" It was for the moment in vain that poor Mr. Cradell endeavoured to asseverate his innocence, and to stake his honour upon his own purity as regarded Mrs. Lupex. Lupex still held to his enemy's cravat, though Eames had now got him by the arm, and so far impeded his movements as to hinder him from proceeding to any graver attack.

"Jemima, Jemima, Jemima!" shouted Mrs. Roper. "Run for the police; run for the police!" But Amelia, who had more presence of mind than her mother, stopped Jemima as she was making to one of the front windows. "Keep where you are," said Amelia. "They'll come quiet in a minute or two." And Amelia no doubt was right. Calling for

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the police when there is a row in the house is like summoning the water-engines when the soot is on fire in the kitchen chimney. In such cases good management will allow the soot to burn itself out, without aid from the water-engines. In the present instance the police were not called in, and I am inclined to think that their presence would not have been advantageous to any of the party.

"Upon-my-honour—I know nothing about her," were the first words which Cradell was able to articulate, when Lupex, under Eames's persuasion, at last relaxed his hold.

Lupex turned round to Miss Spruce with a sardonic grin. "You hear his words,—this enemy to domestic bliss.—Ha, ha! man, tell me whither you have conveyed my wife!"

"If you were to give me the Bank of England I don't know," said Cradell.

"And I'm sure he does not know," said Mrs. Roper, whose suspicions against Cradell were beginning to subside. But as her suspicions subsided, her respect for him decreased. Such was the case also with Miss Spruce, and with Amelia, and with Jemima. They had all thought him to be a great fool for running away with Mrs. Lupex, but now they were beginning to think him a poor creature because he had not done so. Had he committed that active folly he would have been an interesting fool. But now, if, as they all suspected, he knew no more about Mrs. Lupex than they did, he would be a fool without any special interest whatever.

"Of course he doesn't," said Eames.

"No more than I do," said Amelia.

"His very looks show him innocent," said Mrs. Roper

"Indeed they do," said Miss Spruce.

Lupex turned from one to the other as they thus defended the man whom he suspected, and shook his head at each assertion that was made. "And if he doesn't know who does?" he asked. "Haven't I seen it all for the last three months? Is it reasonable to suppose that a creature such as she, used to domestic comforts all her life, should have gone off in this way, at dinner-time, taking with her my property and all her jewels, and that nobody should have instigated her; nobody assisted her! Is that a story to tell to such a man as me! You may tell it to the marines!" Mr. Lupex, as he made this speech, was walking about the room, and as he finished it he threw his pocket-handkerchief with violence on to the floor. "I know what to do, Mrs. Roper," he said. "I know what steps to take. I shall put the affair into the hands of my lawyer to-morrow morning." Then he picked up his handkerchief and walked down into the dining-room.

"Of course you know nothing about it?" said Eames to his friend, having run upstairs for the purpose of saying a word to him while he washed his hands.

"What,—about Maria? I don't know where she is, if you mean that."

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"Of course I mean that. What else should I mean? And what makes you call her Maria?"

"It is wrong. I admit it's wrong. The word will come out, you know."

"Will come out! I'll tell you what it is, old fellow, you'll get yourself into a mess, and all for nothing. That fellow will have you up before the police for stealing his things——"

"But, Johnny——"

"I know all about it. Of course you have not stolen them, and of course there was nothing to steal. But if you go on calling her Maria you'll find that he'll have a pull on you. Men don't call other men's wives names for nothing."

"Of course we've been friends," said Cradell, who rather liked this view of the matter.

"Yes,—you have been friends! She's diddled you out of your money, and that's the beginning and the end of it. And now, if you go on showing off your friendship, you'll be done out of more money. You're making an ass of yourself. That's the long and the short of it."

"And what have you made of yourself with that girl? There are worse asses than I am yet, Master Johnny." Eames, as he had no answer ready to this counter attack, left the room and went downstairs. Cradell soon followed him, and in a few minutes they were all eating their dinner together at Mrs. Roper's hospitable table.

Immediately after dinner Lupex took himself away, and the conversation upstairs became general on the subject of the lady's departure.

"If I was him I'd never ask a question about her, but let her go," said Amelia.

"Yes; and then have all her bills following you, wherever you went," said Amelia's brother.

"I'd sooner have her bills than herself," said Eames.

"My belief is, that she's been an ill-used woman," said Cradell. "If she had a husband that she could respect and have loved, and all that sort of thing, she would have been a charming woman."

"She's every bit as bad as he is," said Mrs. Roper.

"I can't agree with you, Mrs. Roper," continued the lady's champion. "Perhaps I ought to understand her position better than any one here, and——"

"Then that's just what you ought not to do, Mr. Cradell," said Mrs. Roper. And now the lady of the house spoke out her mind with much maternal dignity and with some feminine severity. "That's just what a young man like you has no business to know. What's a married woman like that to you, or you to her; or what have you to do with understanding her position? When you've a wife of your own, if ever you do have one, you'll find you'll have trouble enough then without anybody else interfering with you. Not but what I believe you're innocent as a lamb about Mrs. Lupex; that is, as far as any harm goes. But you've

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got yourself into all this trouble by meddling, and was like enough to get yourself choked upstairs by that man. And who's to wonder when you go on pretending to be in love with a woman in that way, and she old enough to be your mother? What would your mamma say if she saw you at it?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Cradell.

"It's all very well your laughing, but I hate such folly. If I see a young man in love with a young woman, I respect him for it;" and then she looked at Johnny Eames. "I respect him for it,—even though he may now and then do things as he shouldn't. They most of 'em does that. But to see a young man like you, Mr. Cradell, dangling after an old married woman, who doesn't know how to behave herself; and all just because she lets him to do it;—ugh!—an old broomstick with a petticoat on would do just as well! It makes me sick to see it, and that's the truth of it. I don't call it manly; and it ain't manly, is it, Miss Spruce?"

"Of course I know nothing about it," said the lady to whom the appeal was thus made. "But a young gentleman should keep himself to himself till the time comes for him to speak out,—begging your pardon all the same, Mr. Cradell."

"I don't see what a married woman should want with any one after her but her own husband," said Amelia.

"And perhaps not always that," said John Eames.

It was about an hour after this when the front-door bell was rung, and a scream from Jemima announced to them all that some critical moment had arrived. Amelia, jumping up, opened the door, and then the rustle of a woman's dress was heard on the lower stairs. "Oh, laws, ma'am, you have given us sich a turn," said Jemima. "We all thought you was run away."

"It's Mrs. Lupex," said Amelia. And in two minutes more that ill-used lady was in the room.

"Well, my dears," said she, gaily, "I hope nobody has waited dinner."

"No; we didn't wait dinner," said Mrs. Roper, very gravely.

"And where's my Orson? Didn't he dine at home? Mr. Cradell, will you oblige me by taking my shawl? But perhaps you had better not. People are so censorious; ain't they, Miss Spruce? Mr. Eames shall do it; and everybody knows that that will be quite safe. Won't it, Miss Amelia?"

"Quite, I should think," said Amelia. And Mrs. Lupex knew that she was not to look for an ally in that quarter on the present occasion. Eames got up to take the shawl, and Mrs. Lupex went on.

"And didn't Orson dine at home? Perhaps they kept him down at the theatre. But I've been thinking all day what fun it would be when he thought his bird was flown."

"He did dine at home," said Mrs. Roper; "and he didn't seem to like it. There wasn't much fun, I can assure you."

"Ah, wasn't there, though? I believe that man would like to have

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me tied to his button-hole. I came across a few friends,—lady friends, Mr. Cradell, though two of them had their husbands; so we made a party and just went down to Hampton Court. So my gentleman has gone again, has he? That's what I get for gadding about myself, isn't it, Miss Spruce?"

Mrs. Roper, as she went to bed that night, made up her mind that, whatever might be the cost and trouble of doing so, she would lose no further time in getting rid of her married guests.

CHAPTER XLII.

Lily's Bedside.

Lily Dale's constitution was good, and her recovery was retarded by no relapse or lingering debility; but, nevertheless, she was forced to keep her bed for many days after the fever had left her. During all this period Dr. Crofts came every day. It was in vain that Mrs. Dale begged him not to do so; telling him in simple words that she felt herself bound not to accept from him all this continuation of his unremunerated labours now that the absolute necessity for them was over. He answered her only by little jokes, or did not answer her at all; but still he came daily, almost always at the same hour, just as the day was waning, so that he could sit for a quarter of an hour in the dusk, and then ride home to Guestwick in the dark. At this time Bell had been admitted into her sister's room, and she would always meet Dr. Crofts at Lily's bedside; but she never sat with him alone, since the day on which he had offered her his love with half-articulated words, and she had declined it with words also half articulated. She had seen him alone since that, on the stairs, or standing in the hall, but she had not remained with him, talking to him after her old fashion, and no further word of his love had been spoken in speech either half or wholly articulate.

Nor had Bell spoken of what had passed to any one else. Lily would probably have told both her mother and sister instantly; but then no such scene as that which had taken place with Bell would have been possible with Lily. In whatever way the matter might have gone with her, there would certainly have been some clear tale to tell when the interview was over. She would have known whether or no she loved the man, or could love him, and would have given him some true and intelligible answer. Bell had not done so, but had given him an answer which, if true, was not intelligible, and if intelligible was not true. And yet, when she had gone away to think over what had passed, she had been happy and satisfied, and almost triumphant. She had never yet asked herself whether she expected anything further from Dr. Crofts, nor what that something further might be,—and yet she was happy!

Lily had now become pert and saucy in her bed, taking upon herself

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the little airs which are allowed to a convalescent invalid as compensation for previous suffering and restraint. She pretended to much anxiety on the subject of her dinner, and declared that she would go out on such or such a day, let Dr. Crofts be as imperious as he might. "He's an old savage, after all," she said to her sister, one evening, after he was gone, "and just as bad as the rest of them."

"I do not know who the rest of them are," said Bell, "but at any rate he's not very old."

"You know what I mean. He's just as grumpy as Dr. Gruffen, and thinks everybody is to do what he tells them. Of course, you take his part."

"And of course you ought, seeing how good he has been."

"And of course I should, to anybody but you. I do like to abuse him to you."

"Lily, Lily!"

"So I do. It's so hard to knock any fire out of you, that when one does find the place where the flint lies, one can't help hammering at it. What did he mean by saying that I shouldn't get up on Sunday? Of course I shall get up if I like it."

"Not if mamma asks you not?"

"Oh, but she won't, unless he interferes and dictates to her. Oh, Bell, what a tyrant he would be if he were married!"

"Would he?"

"And how submissive you would be, if you were his wife! It's a thousand pities that you are not in love with each other;—that is, if you are not."

"Lily, I thought that there was a promise between us about that."

"Ah! but that was in other days. Things are all altered since that promise was given,—all the world has been altered." And as she said this the tone of her voice was changed, and it had become almost sad. "I feel as though I ought to be allowed now to speak about anything I please."

"You shall, if it pleases you, my pet."

"You see how it is, Bell; I can never again have anything of my own to talk about."

"Oh, my darling, do not say that."

"But it is so, Bell; and why not say it? Do you think I never say it to myself in the hours when I am all alone, thinking over it—thinking, thinking, thinking. You must not,—you must not grudge to let me talk of it sometimes."

"I will not grudge you anything;—only I cannot believe that it must be so always."

"Ask yourself, Bell, how it would be with you. But I sometimes fancy that you measure me differently from yourself."

"Indeed I do, for I know how much better you are."

"I am not so much better as to be ever able to forget all that. I

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know I never shall do so. I have made up my mind about it clearly and with an absolute certainty."

"Lily, Lily, Lily! pray do not say so."

"But I do say it. And yet I have not been very mopish and melancholy; have I, Bell? I do think I deserve some little credit, and yet, I declare, you won't allow me the least privilege in the world."

"What privilege would you wish me to give you?"

"To talk about Dr. Crofts."

"Lily, you are a wicked, wicked tyrant." And Bell leaned over her, and fell upon her, and kissed her, hiding her own face in the gloom of the evening. After that it came to be an accepted understanding between them that Bell was not altogether indifferent to Dr. Crofts.

"You heard what he said, my darling," Mrs. Dale said the next day, as the three were in the room together after Dr. Crofts was gone. Mrs. Dale was standing on one side of the bed, and Bell on the other, while Lily was scolding them both. "You can get up for an hour or two to-morrow, but he thinks you had better not go out of the room."

"What would be the good of that, mamma? I am so tired of looking always at the same paper. It is such a tiresome paper. It makes one count the pattern over and over again. I wonder how you ever can live here.'

"I've got used to it, you see."

"I never can get used to that sort of thing; but go on counting, and counting, and counting. I'll tell you what I should like; and I'm sure it would be the best thing, too."

"And what would you like?" said Bell.

"Just to get up at nine o'clock to-morrow, and go to church as though nothing had happened. Then, when Dr. Crofts came in the evening, you would tell him I was down at the school."

"I wouldn't quite advise that," said Mrs. Dale.

"It would give him such a delightful start. And when he found I didn't die immediately, as of course I ought to do according to rule, he would be so disgusted."

"It would be very ungrateful, to say the least of it," said Bell.

"No, it wouldn't, a bit. He needn't come, unless he likes it. And I don't believe he comes to see me at all. It's all very well, mamma, your looking in that way; but I'm sure it's true. And I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll pretend to be bad again, otherwise the poor man will be robbed of his only happiness."

"I suppose we must allow her to say what she likes till she gets well," said Mrs. Dale, laughing. It was now nearly dark, and Mrs. Dale did not see that Bell's hand had crept under the bedclothes, and taken hold of that of her sister. "It's true, mamma," continued Lily, "and I defy her to deny it. I would forgive him for keeping me in bed if he would only make her fall in love with him."

"She has made a bargain, mamma," said Bell, "that she is to say whatever she likes till she gets well."

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"I am to say whatever I like always; that was the bargain, and I mean to stand to it."

On the following Sunday Lily did get up, but did not leave her mother's bedroom. There she was, seated in that half-dignified and half-luxurious state which belongs to the first getting up of an invalid, when Dr. Crofts called. There she had eaten her tiny bit of roast mutton, and had called her mother a stingy old creature, because she would not permit another morsel; and there she had drunk her half glass of port wine, pretending that it was very bad, and twice worse than the doctor's physic; and there, Sunday though it was, she had fully enjoyed the last hour of daylight, reading that exquisite new novel which had just completed itself, amidst the jarring criticisms of the youth and age of the reading public.

"I am quite sure she was right in accepting him, Bell," she said, putting down the book as the light was fading, and beginning to praise the story.

"It was a matter of course," said Bell. "It always is right in the novels. That's why I don't like them. They are too sweet."

"That's why I do like them, because they are so sweet. A sermon is not to tell you what you are, but what you ought to be; and a novel should tell you not what you are to get, but what you'd like to get."

"If so, then, I'd go back to the old school, and have the heroine really a heroine, walking all the way up from Edinburgh to London, and falling among thieves; or else nursing a wounded hero, and describing the battle from the window. We've got tired of that; or else the people who write can't do it now-a-days. But if we are to have real life, let it be real."

"No, Bell, no!" said Lily. "Real life sometimes is so painful." Then her sister, in a moment, was down on the floor at her feet, kissing her hand and caressing her knees, and praying that the wound might be healed.

On that morning Lily had succeeded in inducing her sister to tell her all that had been said by Dr. Crofts. All that had been said by herself also, Bell had intended to tell; but when she came to this part of the story, her account was very lame. "I don't think I said anything," she said. "But silence always gives consent. He'll know that," Lily had rejoined. "No, he will not; my silence didn't give any consent; I'm sure of that. And he didn't think that it did." "But you didn't mean to refuse him?" "I think I did. I don't think I knew what I meant; and it was safer, therefore, to look no, than to look yes. If I didn't say it, I'm sure I looked it." "But you wouldn't refuse him now?" asked Lily. "I don't know," said Bell. "It seems as though I should want years to make up my mind; and he won't ask me again."

Bell was still at her sister's feet, caressing them, and praying with all her heart that that wound might be healed in due time, when Mrs. Dale came in and announced the doctor's daily visit. "Then I'll go," said Bell.

"Indeed you won't," said Lily. "He's coming simply to make a morning call, and nobody need run away. Now, Dr. Crofts, you need not come and stand over me with your watch, for I won't let you touch my

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hand except to shake hands with me;" and then she held her hand out to him. "And all you'll know of my tongue you'll learn from the sound."

"I don't care in the least for your tongue."

"I dare say not, and yet you may some of these days. I can speak out, if I like it; can't I, mamma?"

"I should think Dr. Crofts knows that by this time, my dear."

"I don't know. There are some things gentlemen are very slow to learn. But you must sit down, Dr. Crofts, and make yourself comfortable and polite; for you must understand that you are not master here any longer. I'm out of bed now, and your reign is over."

"That's the gratitude of the world all through," said Mrs. Dale.

"Who is ever grateful to a doctor? He only cures you that he may triumph over some other doctor, and declare, as he goes by Dr. Gruffen's door, 'There, had she called you in, she'd have been dead before now; or else would have been ill for twelve months.' Don't you jump for joy when Dr. Gruffen's patients die?"

"Of course I do,—out in the market-place, so that everybody shall see me," said the doctor.

"Lily, how can you say such shocking things?" said her sister.

Then the doctor did sit down, and they were all very cosy together over the fire, talking about things which were not medical, or only half medical in their appliance. By degrees the conversation came round to Mrs. Eames and to John Eames. Two or three days since Crofts had told Mrs. Dale of that affair at the railway station, of which up to that time she had heard nothing. Mrs. Dale, when she was assured that young Eames had given Crosbie a tremendous thrashing,—the tidings of the affair which had got themselves substantiated at Guestwick so described the nature of the encounter,—could not withhold some meed of applause.

"Dear boy!" she said, almost involuntarily. "Dear boy! It came from the honestness of his heart!" And then she gave special injunctions to the doctor,—injunctions which were surely unnecessary,—that no word of the matter should be whispered before Lily.

"I was at the manor, yesterday," said the doctor, "and the earl would talk about nothing but Master Johnny. He says he's the finest fellow going." Whereupon Mrs. Dale touched him with her foot, fearing that the conversation might be led away in the direction of Johnny's prowess.

"I am so glad," said Lily. "I always knew that they'd find John out at last."

"And Lady Julia is just as fond of him," said the doctor.

"Dear me!" said Lily. "Suppose they were to make up a match!"

"Lily, how can you be so absurd?"

"Let me see; what relation would he be to us? He would certainly be Bernard's uncle, and uncle Christopher's half brother-in-law. Wouldn't it be odd?"

"It would rather," said Mrs. Dale.

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"I hope he'll be civil to Bernard. Don't you, Bell? Is he to give up the Income-tax Office, Dr. Crofts?"

"I didn't hear that that was settled yet." And so they went on talking about John Eames.

"Joking apart," said Lily, "I am very glad that Lord De Guest has taken him by the hand. Not that I think an earl is better than anybody else, but because it shows that people are beginning to understand that he has got something in him. I always said that they who laughed at John would see him hold up his head yet." All which words sank deep into Mrs. Dale's mind. If only, in some coming time, her pet might be taught to love this new young hero! But then would not that last heroic deed of his militate most strongly against any possibility of such love!

"And now I may as well be going," said the doctor, rising from his chair. At this time Bell had left the room, but Mrs. Dale was still there.

"You need not be in such a hurry, especially this evening," said Lily.

"Why especially this evening?"

"Because it will be the last. Sit down again, Doctor Crofts. I've got a little speech to make to you. I've been preparing it all the morning, and you must give me an opportunity of speaking it."

"I'll come the day after to-morrow, and I'll hear it then."

"But I choose, sir, that you should hear it now. Am I not to be obeyed when I first get up on to my own throne? Dear, dear Dr. Crofts, how am I to thank you for all that you have done?"

"How are any of us to thank him?" said Mrs. Dale.

"I hate thanks," said the doctor. "One kind glance of the eye is worth them all, and I've had many such in this house."

"You have our hearts' love, at any rate," said Mrs. Dale.

"God bless you all!" said he, as he prepared to go.

"But I haven't made my speech yet," said Lily. "And to tell the truth, mamma, you must go away, or I shall never be able to make it. It's very improper, is it not, turning you out, but it shall only take three minutes." Then Mrs. Dale, with some little joking word, left the room; but, as she left it, her mind was hardly at ease. Ought she to have gone, leaving it to Lily's discretion to say what words she might think fit to Dr. Crofts? Hitherto she had never doubted her daughters,—not even their discretion; and therefore it had been natural to her to go when she was bidden. But as she went downstairs she had her doubts whether she was right or no.

"Dr. Crofts," said Lily as soon as they were alone. "Sit down there, close to me. I want to ask you a question. What was it you said to Bell when you were alone with her the other evening in the parlour?"

The doctor sat for a moment without answering, and Lily, who was watching him closely, could see by the light of the fire that he had been startled,—had almost shuddered as the question was asked him.

"What did I say to her?" and he repeated her words in a very low voice. "I asked her if she could love me, and be my wife."

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"And what answer did she make to you?"

"What answer did she make? She simply refused me."

"No, no, no; don't believe her, Dr. Crofts. It was not so;—I think it was not so. Mind you, I can say nothing as coming from her. She has not told me her own mind. But if you really love her, she will be mad to refuse you."

"I do love her, Lily; that at any rate is true."

"Then go to her again. I am speaking for myself now. I cannot afford to lose such a brother as you would be. I love you so dearly that I cannot spare you. And she,—I think she'll learn to love you as you would wish to be loved. You know her nature, how silent she is, and averse to talk about herself. She has confessed nothing to me but this, —that you spoke to her and took her by surprise. Are we to have another chance? I know how wrong I am to ask such a question. But, after all, is not the truth the best?"

"Another chance!"

"I know what you mean, and I think she is worthy to be your wife. I do, indeed; and if so, she must be very worthy. You won't tell of me, will you now, doctor?"

"No; I won't tell of you."

"And you'll try again?"

"Yes; I'll try again."

"God bless you, my brother! I hope,—I hope you'll be my brother." Then, as he put out his hand to her once more, she raised her head towards him, and he, stooping down, kissed her forehead. "Make mamma come to me," were the last words she spoke as he went out at the door.

"So you've made your speech," said Mrs. Dale.

"Yes, mamma."

"I hope it was a discreet speech."

"I hope it was, mamma. But it has made me so tired, and I believe I'll go to bed. Do you know I don't think I should have done much good down at the school to-day?"

Then Mrs. Dale, in her anxiety to repair what injury might have been done to her daughter by over-exertion, omitted any further mention of the farewell speech.

Dr. Crofts as he rode home enjoyed but little of the triumph of a successful lover. "It may be that she's right," he said to himself; "and, at any rate, I'll ask again." Nevertheless, that "No" which Bell had spoken, and had repeated, still sounded in his ears harsh and conclusive. There are men to whom a peal of noes rattling about their ears never takes the sound of a true denial, and others to whom the word once pronounced, be it whispered ever so softly, comes as though it were an unchangeable verdict from the supreme judgment-seat.

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Sea-Fights, Ancient and Modern.

The first thing that strikes one in contemplating naval warfare is that its modern revolutions are giving it a strange kind of resemblance to its most ancient forms. The classical galley fought like a bird with its beak, and this is also the case with American rams and Monitors. Let us further assume that steam plays in the modern world the part of oars among the ancients, and that the wind is becoming a secondary consideration to us as to them, and the likeness will be allowed to be still more curious. At all events, it is sufficiently piquant to give a stimulus to one's interest in the history of this great subject; a retrospective glance at which may perhaps be excused from a man of letters to whom sea-life is not altogether unfamiliar.

I presume that all who profess some interest in ancient literature will agree with the following dictum of the celebrated scholar who has just retired, after a long and useful career, from the Glasgow Latin chair. "In no one of the arts which have been practised by mankind," says Professor Ramsay, "was the inferiority of the ancients to the moderns more conspicuous than in navigation." The Greeks and Romans knew well the commercial value of the sea as a highway. They knew well its political value as an instrument of dominion. But though in applying their genius to navigation they showed their customary ingenuity and courage, they never developed the art into anything like the proportions which it has attained among ourselves. Our sea-life to-day commands the whole planet, and ranges over regions compared with which the Mediterranean is only a pleasant lake. On that lake the classical laurels were all won, and somehow it is not easy to picture their greatest vessels in the imagination as anything but boats. Gigantic boats the larger specimens of them no doubt were; but they never dispensed with the use of the oar, nor cleft the sea in all weathers, as modern ships do. It was customary to haul up their vessels, for instance, during the winter; and Horace enumerates the launching of them among the signs of the return of spring. They had masts—though generally only one—and seldom, if ever, more than two; and they did not advance beyond the construction of paddle-rudders worked on the quarters. That they could not beat to windward is more than can be fairly affirmed, and we know that in going before the wind the merchant-ship in which St. Paul sailed did her seven knots. But though seamanship was so far developed, that tacking, and such operations as are necessary in making way against a foul wind, were not unknown, we must not suppose that the classical *man-of-war*

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could manœuvre *under sail* in the fashion of the squadrons of Nelson and Collingwood. To *them* the oars were everything—whether on ordinary occasions or in battle—and they were classed according to their banks of oars, much as our men-of-war are classed according to their tiers of guns. Not, of course, that a bireme corresponded with our two-decker, a trireme with our three-decker, and so forth; but that the vessel rose in rank in the line of battle in proportion to the number of the banks of oars which it had. Thus, in the spirited sea-fight in the third book of Lucan, we have the admiral's vessel—*prætoria puppis*—of Brutus,—domineering over the scene by dint of her six tiers of oars. How the oars were arranged in these larger vessels is one of the crack puzzles of commentators, and it is as hard work studying them, as it must have been pulling them. Dr. Arnold thought the problem insoluble, and whether it be so or not does not concern our special business just now; suffice it, that classical war-vessels *had* rows of oars, by which their whole movements were regulated,—and regulated, as the art advanced, not less cleverly than our steamers. The oarsmen, or rowers, were generally slaves and freedmen, and in any case, the *fighting* life and the *nautical* life of an ancient man-of-war were two distinct worlds. The *epibatæ* of the Greeks—the *classiarii milites* of the Romans—were soldiers who fought afloat, and not sailors, in our sense of the word, at all. Ingenious lexicographers describe them as "marines," but this is to suggest an incomplete analogy. The great bulk of the fighting power of a modern man-of-war is nautical in the strictest sense. The broadside is fired by seamen-gunners—the same seamen who do all the work of the vessel. The marines form an auxiliary military body—infinitely respectable no doubt; but quite disproportionate in numbers and importance. Now, in the old world, the military men were the sole fighting force, and the sailor belonged to a distinctly inferior rank; and hence the curious circumstance—one of the many frequent contrasts between ancient and modern life—that the seaman was held in little honour by the ancients. In the first place, the gentleman-seaman—the Collingwood of our experience—was a character of which antiquity knew nothing either in history or fiction. A Greek Tennyson or a Roman Wellington could be easily found; not so a Nelson of the Ægean, or a Jervis of Latium. Nay, our common seaman—Jack himself—was not a character to be matched in the ancient world; and though we have hints of his existence, classical literature does not take kindly to him. The philosophers thought the nautical element bad, politically,—turbulent, and ultra-democratic. The poets and satirists heard the sailor carol about his mistress, and noted that his voice was husky with wine, but treated him as no more picturesque or interesting than other social riff-raff. Juvenal, in glancing at somebody who frequented the lowest haunts, observes that you may find him mingling with sailors, thieves, and fugitives. And there is a curious passage in one of Cicero's letters, in which he says that at his time of life, a sea voyage would hardly become his "dignity." How

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different the associations which this presents from those suggested by Sir Walter Scott's voyage in the *Barham!*

But while it is important to remember such points of difference between ancient and modern sea-life, it is equally important to remember to do justice to the sea Powers of antiquity. From humble beginnings they developed into a strength which saved Europe from the barbarians, and preserved order and civilization—though not always completely—in the Mediterranean Sea. A mighty progress took place between the time when Homer's mariners lowered the mast, flung out the stone, as anchor, from the prow, and fastened the stern by ropes to erections on the beach; and the time when the Romans had a "channel fleet" of turreted triremes and quinqueremes stationed at Misenum. This progress was begun by the Greeks, who started, as Thucydides tells us, with "fifty oared vessels and long boats," and whose vessels were not yet decked throughout, even by the time of the Persian war. Triremes—the line-of-battle ships of antiquity—were first made by the Corinthians. But Greece owed to Athens, and Athens owed to Themistocles, the real development of naval power into something noble and considerable. The earliest sea-fights were between Corinth and Corcyra; between Athens and Ægina. But the young naval valour of the Greeks received its regular baptism in the waters of Salamis. Athens began her nautical history much as England began hers—by scattering an *armada*.

In Salamis, we have the first great sea-fight of antiquity, and one of lasting interest and importance in the annals of the world. Athens had been burnt to the very roots of the Sacred Olive. The Persian was in possession of the ruined capital, and of the whole shore, along which his thousand war-galleys, Phœnician, Ionian, Egyptian, were drawn up. To those who know the scene of the battle, there is something singularly picturesque in recalling it, and peopling it with the figures of that ancient day. Opposite the Piræus lies the little island of Psyttaleia, rocky and bare-looking, clad only with shrubs; and on its left the island of Salamis, also desolate in aspect, and hardly made cheerful by the sunlight playing in the blue sea round about. In the strait between Salamis and the mainland lay the Greek fleet, with the enemy between them and their native land. Facing the enemy, from his galley an Athenian would see the heights to the left crowned with the troops of the barbarian, and his ships lining the coast, so that he would look across a part of them at the blackened Acropolis rising from the plain, and the background of barren and duskily purple hills. The Persian vessels were to the Greek as three to one, and hence it was an advantage to the Greeks to fight in the strait, rather than in the open sea. This calculation was one motive of the celebrated stratagem of Themistocles, who sent false information,—that his countrymen meditated flight—to the barbarian, and so persuaded him to encircle Salamis closely, and to bring on the battle. When the day broke, the falsely confident men of Asia—many of whom had been rowing all night to intercept an enemy who made no attempt to fly—advanced to

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the attack. But the pæan rose from the three hundred odd war-vessels of the children of Hellas—their oars fell with regular dip and flash in the wave—and raising cheerful cries of hope, and valour, and patriotism, they rushed through the tide upon the enemy's fleet. On each Greek vessel there were eighteen *epibatæ*, or fighting men, a small proportion of whom were archers,—though this was an arm in which the invader was stronger. But the first and chief execution was done by the brazen beaks of the ships themselves. They struck like spears, as Æschylus says in his noble description in the *Persæ*. Sometimes the Persian's figure-head was shorn clean away, or he was sinking before his shower of darts and javelins could take effect. A blow of this kind smashed a bank of oars, and left the vessel helpless. And the Greeks acted in order, advanced in line, and, when the first stream of enemies got into confusion, surrounded them in a ring, battering them from every point of the circle. The Persians fought well, notwithstanding, and Herodotus tells us that they "surpassed themselves." But the rout was not long in becoming general, and the Greeks pursued the encumbered fugitives like fishermen pursuing a shoal of tunny fish. Such is Æschylus' comparison,—curiously vivid when one remembers that Mediterranean fishermen still capture those clumsy and coarse fish by driving them into a corner, and beating them to death with pole and pike. Not less vividly, the same great poet (who may have been in the battle, though this is not certain) speaks of the Persian garments as floating on the water. The early writers seem to have loved to dwell on the details of this memorable sea-fight,—how there was a shock of earthquake at sunrise; how Xerxes shrieked and tore his clothes, when he saw from his "rocky brow" the slaughter of a band of illustrious Persians who had been stationed on Psyttaleia; how the first man that took a ship was Lycomedes, an Athenian, who cut down its ensign and dedicated it to Apollo the Laurel-crowned. Nor is the poetry of early superstition wanting in the tales about the great day, for we hear of a Greek galley on the other side of Salamis being warned of what was going on by a spectre bark,—a remote ancestor of the *Flying Dutchman!*

Regarding the battle of Salamis from a more strictly naval point of view, we find—

1st. A seamanlike calculation of the position. It was wise in the Greek leaders to fight in the straits, because it would have been an advantage to the larger force to fight in the open sea. As it was, they were crowded, and unable to help each other. Their superior size—an advantage which the Spanish Armada also possessed—was thus little felt, and in the fight became a *dis*advantage, because the sea-breeze had sprung up and made them less manageable.

2nd. An excellent, and strictly *naval* fleet-manœuvring. The Greeks advanced in good order, and kept their order, and surrounded the enemy at the proper time. This shows that naval tactics on a large scale were beginning to be understood.

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The Athenians did not perhaps display more absolute gallantry at Salamis than other Greek races—not more, for instance, than the Æginetans. But they contributed a much larger portion than the other Grecian allies of the ships—a hundred and eighty, it is said, out of three hundred and seventy-eight—while their ships were also the best. They contributed, too, above all, the admiral, the ingenious, inventive, supple, audacious Themistocles, the hero and intellect of the day. Salamis, in fact, made Athens the leading naval power of Greece by its influence as a tradition. She always reverted to it with pride; and its constant freshness in her memory stimulated her to new inventions, and new flights of ambition. Accordingly, between 480 B.C., when the Battle of Salamis was fought, and 432 B.C., in which the Peloponnesian War began, Athens made great naval progress, and extended her power and influence in every direction, by dint of it. And it was *naval* progress essentially, involving a great improvement in the art of manœuvring fleets. Thus, Pericles, in his speech before the opening of the war last mentioned, encourages his audience by reminding them of their superiority in these particulars. "For the naval business," he says, "is a matter of art like everything else, and cannot be made a by-work of." The Peloponnesians, he argues, had not had the practice of the Athenians, and, what is more, could be prevented from attaining it, by being *blockaded* (*Thucyd.* I., 142). The argument gives one a keen feeling of the resemblances running through human history; for the injury done to French seamanship by the prolonged blockades of the last great war has often been pointed out by our naval writers. Pericles talks just as Pitt might have done; and, indeed, in another passage of this same oration he advises the Athenians to try and feel as much like *islanders* as possible.

A tolerable notion of what Greek sea-fights were at this, the best, period, may be gathered from studying the engagements of Phormio, the Athenian general-admiral, in the Corinthian Gulf in 429 B.C. He was blockading there one day, keeping his eye on Patræ, so well known to old Mediterranean officers as the *Patras* of our day, with its ruined mediæval castle and flower-garden, its seedy old church, its currant-fields along the shore, its evening parties at the consul of the Morea's, and its cool *yaoort* for breakfast, brought out in tin cans by the boatmen. A Peloponnesian squadron having come out from there, and making for Acarnania, was overtaken by Phormio in mid passage, and compelled to fight. It immediately stood on its defence in an ingenious way. The vessels ranged themselves in a circle, prows out, sterns in, leaving no opening to the enemy, but keeping inside their small craft, and five of their best sailers ready to strengthen any point attacked. There, like a catharine-wheel, the Peloponnesian squadron waited, while round and round the Athenians sailed in single line, sweeping past them, and narrowing their circle. Phormio was content to bide his time, and make no hasty attack. For he knew when to expect the sea-breeze, and he knew that a breeze is always in a sea-fight the ally of the best seaman. He

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was not disappointed. The wind came down from the mouth of the gulf, and pretty soon began to "kick up a bobbery," as sailors say. Ship fell foul of ship. The Peloponnesians could not lift their oars in the swell of the sea. Vainly did the *keleustês*—an officer who in Greek vessels made the rowers keep time—roar out his orders. The squadron fell into confusion, and, in the confusion, Phormio made his assault. He sank the vessel of the commander, the flag-ship, at once, then some others, and, capturing a dozen, sank the rest. After erecting a trophy at Rhium, and dedicating a ship to Neptune, he returned to his head-quarters on the northern side of the gulf—Naupactus—destined to become so famous in naval annals just two thousand years afterwards, under its Italian name of *Lepanto*. The defeat just recounted did not discourage the Lacedæmonians and their allies. They prepared to revenge themselves on Phormio; and the details of the attempt show how thoroughly alive Greeks of all races were now becoming to the importance of naval strategy. They brought together seventy-seven vessels, and lay opposite Phormio, who had only twenty, near the mouth of the gulf. For some days the fleets watched each other. The Peloponnesians were determined not to sail outward, for they did not want to fight in the open, while the Athenians, conscious of their manœuvring skill, wished not to fight in the narrows. Each went on practising and preparing for the battle in the meantime. At last the Peloponnesians tried a feint. They moved inwards in a column, four abreast, with their right wing leading, and seemed to threaten an attack on Naupactus. The Athenians immediately advanced along the northern shore of the gulf, to cover that place, when the enemy wheeled round and attacked them in line. The Athenians were taken at a disadvantage by a force so superior; and nine of their ships were driven on shore and destroyed, or taken in tow to be dragged off. But the success was badly followed up. Twenty of the Peloponnesian right wing pursued the Athenian vessels which had escaped, but in so disorderly a manner that these rallied off Naupactus, and, with a loud shout, rushed upon them. The result was that the day was retrieved; for the Athenians took six of the enemy, and recovered such vessels of their own as had been taken in tow.

A curious picture of the ancient naval life is afforded by an alarm which the Lacedæmonians gave to Athens this same summer. The Piræus was known to be left unguarded, from the careless sense of their superiority at sea which the Athenians felt. So the Peloponnesians sent a body of men to cross the isthmus to Megara, *each carrying his oar, and cushion, and 'tropotêr'* (a thong with which the oars were fastened to the thole), there to seize the Megarian vessels laid up at Nisæa, and from thence to sail to the Piræus and attack it. The expedition succeeded so far as to give Athens a fright, though, except that the Peloponnesians got some booty at Salamis, no mischief was done. But the incident shows what a primitive sort of thing naval war was with the ancients, when men, carrying each his oar, could go overland to improvise an attack on one of

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the most famous harbours. It shows, also, as Dr. Arnold points out in a note on his *Thucydides*, that each oar was pulled by one man, which is intelligible in the case of a trireme, but is difficult to understand when we come to deal with quadriremes, quinqueremes, and so forth.

Still, we must remember that this elaborate boat-fighting of theirs was conducted on a great scale, and with much dexterity, by the Greeks. There were nearly four hundred vessels on the Greek side, as we have seen, at Salamis; and engagements of a hundred a side happened several times during the Peloponnesian War. It was essentially boat-fighting, no doubt. It generally went on in gulfs, or in sight of land; and when the ordinary sea-breeze could be calculated on to disturb the least nautical of the combatants, one must not talk much of the *seamanship* displayed, from a modern point of view. There were no manœuvres for the weather-gage; no chases through a gale of wind; no shifting spars during action; no loss of masts; none of those terrible struggles with foe and tempest together which trained for long ages the countrymen of Blake and Tromp. There was not even that continuity of sea-life, and isolation from the other pursuits of the world, which has formed the modern nautical character, and has given us in Commodore Trunnion a creation beyond the reach of Aristophanic comedy. The stately Greek galley haunted the pleasant bays, and wandered within sight of the purple hills of their romantic land. But, of its kind, their fighting at sea was admirable. They had the *diekplous*, or "breaking the line;" the *periplous*, or sailing round an enemy; the *anakrousis*, or backing water, to gain impetus for a charge with the beak; with other movements calculated and well prepared—showing that strategy afloat was to them a matter of study and art. And, at bottom, they rested on two great principles never likely to be superseded in naval warfare—the use of the ram, and boarding. Their manœuvres were mainly valuable in enabling them to employ *these* at an advantage over enemies who handled their galleys more clumsily. If a successful stroke, or series of strokes, was made with the beak, the enemy's game was up. If the vessels closed without such success, the strife was settled by a hand-to-hand conflict, beginning with a shower of darts and stones.

The failure of the great Sicilian expedition left Syracuse the strongest Greek naval power; and the naval interest of the world now transfers itself from the east to the west of the Mediterranean. The mighty rival of Syracuse—Carthage—was the real ruler of that sea in the interval between the days of Alcibiades and those of the Punic Wars. The Carthaginians were the first people who habitually employed war-vessels larger than the regular triremes; and their quinqueremes not only kept the Sicilian coast-towns in order, but (*circa* B.C. 262) checked Roman commerce, and menaced Italy with partition. The great people destined to rule the world were insultingly told that they could not wash their hands in the sea without Phœnician permission. There are few greater things in Rome's history than the spirit with which she resolved to have

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a fleet, and the energy with which she set about creating one. England has built many a ship on French models, and the Romans set their ship-builders—hitherto only accustomed to building merchant-vessels—to work upon a Carthaginian *pentêrês*, *i. e.* quinquereme, that had been stranded. In B.C. 260, she sent to sea a fleet of a hundred and twenty sail. Of course it was very inferior to the Carthaginian one, and if the Romans had tried to conquer by manœuvring only, they would probably have been hopelessly defeated. But their strong military and mechanical instincts stood them in good stead. They put bodies of soldiers on board, and contrived bridges which could be lowered in front of, or on each side of, the prow. When the vessels closed, these struck upon the enemy, and held to him by grappling-irons; so that the soldiers boarded over them, and carried the day, as in a land fight. Thus was gained the first Roman victory of Duillius, in B.C. 260, at Mylæ, to the north-west of Messana—which may be called, from a naval point of view, the Salamis of Rome. Four years afterwards, the Romans sent an expedition to the coast of Libya, comprising three hundred and thirty sail, which, besides a hundred thousand men in its crews, carried a landing force of forty thousand. This immense armament advanced upon a Carthaginian fleet of three hundred and fifty vessels, off Ecnomus, in the form of a wedge, and was received in line. Twenty-four sail of the Romans were sunk in the battle; while of the Carthaginians, twenty-four were sunk and sixty-four taken. The Romans effected their landing, after an engagement the scale of which shows the greatness attained by the ancient world in this branch of warfare. During this first Punic War the Romans had several reverses; but it was their fleet that pulled them through and gave them the victory at last. They never became what could be called a naval people, nor took to such pursuits so cheerfully as the more flexible Greek. Indeed, their best naval men were Italians of Greek blood. But still the Roman Government, in its fine, solid, substantial fashion, took care always to have squadrons when squadrons were wanted. Piracy having attained enormous dimensions at one time, they gave Pompey *carte blanche* to clear the Mediterranean from it; and he swept the pirates off the sea much as you would do red mullet with a seine there. The Roman taste in naval matters was for big ships with towers or castles,—similar in principle to those once used by ourselves, and from which our *forecastle* got its new familiar but meaningless name. It is to such stately craft that Horace alludes when he addresses Mæcenas in the first epode:—

> Ibis Liburnis inter alta navium,
> Amice, propugnacula:
>
> If thou in thy Liburnians go,
> Amid the bulwark'd galleys of the foe.—*Theodore Martin.*

Mæcenas was "going" (but didn't go after all) to accompany Augustus to that famous battle of Actium, which closed the career of Antony, and gave Augustus the empire of the world;—a battle of some nautical,

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much political, and, perhaps, even more sentimental interest to the world! The burly and coarsely splendid debauchee, who boasted of his descent from Bacchus, and did a good deal to prove it, played his cards ill in the last years of his life. The east of the Mediterranean being under his rule, he might have prepared a far better naval force to play the great game of empire with than he did. The September of 31 B.C. found him on the coast of Acarnania, at the head of a fleet containing, indeed, fine strong vessels—some of eight and ten banks of oars—but badly manned and ill-disciplined. On the other hand, the fleet of Octavianus, less showy and bulky, was in infinitely better order, and seasoned in the contests with Sextus Pompeius, lately removed from the path of the quiet, cynical, and commanding ambition of the second Cæsar. The rivals fought at the mouth of the Ambracian Gulf. Antony was within the mouth, Octavian without; and the fight began at noon by the advance of Antony's left wing. Actium, still more than most of the great classical sea-fights, was a land battle on salt water. We hear little of the kind of manœuvring which Phormio loved, or of the boarding of the Punic wars. The smaller, nimbler vessels of Octavian hung round Antony's stately and ornamented hulls, and battered at them with spears, javelins, and fire-tipped arrows, while they, in their turn, hurled missiles from catapults planted on their wooden towers. During the fight, Augustus (we anticipate some three years, by giving him this title) shot to and fro among his fleet in a swift Liburnian, encouraging his men. His victory was by no means sure, up to the time of Cleopatra's flight; and both sides were astonished when the Egyptian queen's detachment hoisted sail and made for the Peloponnesus. Her vessels having been stationed *inside* Antony's largest ships, disturbed the order of these in breaking through; and despair, perhaps, made part of the infatuation which prompted him to follow her. He jumped into a quinquereme, and fled away to his doom, observed only by a part of the brave fleet which he had deserted, and which fought till nightfall, having been damaged by a heavy sea that set in towards evening. Augustus slept that night on board his vessel, secure of empire. He had taken three hundred ships, and killed five thousand men.

But it is now time to leave the Mediterranean, and to turn our thoughts to the great Northern Sea, in which the ancestors of the Blakes, Nelsons, and Tromps were all this while engaged in amber-fishing, rude piracy, seal-hunting, and who knows what? clad in wolf-skin, drinking out of deer's horn, and leading a turbulent, heathen, animal, but not ignoble, not unhappy existence, through long dark ages, destitute of a history. Before quitting the pleasant southern waters of the lemon-scented Ægean—still warm from the limbs of Venus, though her worship is over there—I will only remark that Mediterranean sea-fighting has always been galley or barge fighting—always an affair of row-boats. The Northern races have taken men-of-war of the modern stamp there. But the Mediterranean races have always followed the classical tradition, and clashed against each other in galleys, by the help and to the music of the

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oar. It was so in the battles which the Dorias of Genoa fought with the Pisanis of Venice, or the Sismondis of Pisa. It was so in the great battle of Lepanto, in 1571, when Charles the Fifth's brilliant bastard, Don John, took or destroyed two hundred and fifty Turkish galleys, and Alexander of Parma slew Mustapha Bey, in boarding the treasure ship, with his double-handed sword. The traveller still sees on the palaces on the Lung-Arno of Pisa, the rusty rings to which the galleys of her patricians were moored in the glorious days of mediæval Italy.

To come, however, to our own ancestors—men inferior to none of these anywhere, and surely superior to them on salt water. What says the *Heimskringla* in one of its snatches of song?

> The Norseman's king is on the sea,
> Though bitter wintry cold it be,
> On the wild waves his Yule keeps he.

The man of the North was afloat early—afloat in all weathers. The sea was his companion from boyhood, his highway to fortune; and he was buried often on some hill overlooking it, where its breezes could play about his lair. Like the Greek, the Norseman began with a boat—single-masted, and with a single square sail—useful only in going before the wind. We hear of one old Northern king who could walk outside the gunwale, on the oars, while the men were rowing his vessel, the *Serpent*. Wonderful things were done with the small resources of those old times by the men of Scandinavia and Frisia. The Mediterranean visited before the end of the eighth century; Normandy conquered before the end of the ninth; England planted with Norse and Danish colonists in the north and east, sufficiently attest the vigour of the heathen seamen of the great Northern Sea. It would be, however, as much beyond the scope of my present paper to detail these wars, as it would have been to dwell on the long-continued Greek piracy which preceded the Persian invasion. We know that in Alfred's time there were galleys of sixty oars, and that the Danes sometimes attacked England in fleets a hundred strong. The roots of our naval greatness lie hidden in the darkness of those old times, like the roots of an oak in the earth. Alfred is our first naval king—the only English king, except Cœur de Lion and Edward the Third, who has ever been present, as king, at a naval battle.* His example ought to have taught the Saxons better than to allow the Norman to land in 1066, after elaborate preparation and fair warning, without striking a blow at him on the waters of the Channel. But the Conquest was to be; and the first organization of a regular English navy was to come from sovereigns who drew their blood from Normandy and Anjou. Richard the First sent a fleet to the Holy Land, which weathered out a gale in the Bay of Biscay; and off Acre, in the June of 1191, he himself encountered a huge Turkish galley, and sent her to the bottom after a tough struggle. The first Articles of War belong to Richard's time, and are as terrible as all such codes have

* James the Second, *while Duke of York*, fought against the Dutch.

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been, down to our own. John made many regulations on the subject of the navy, the nucleus of which was the batch of vessels furnished by the Cinque Ports, and which was freely increased by the impressment of merchant-vessels when the necessity arose. Naval service, in fact, was a feudal duty, like military service; and we know that in 1205, there were a hundred galleys ready for sea at various ports along the coast from Lynn to Bristol.* Knights, soldiers, and archers appear as serving in them. Their crews were fed on herrings, and bacon, and wine.

A feudal navy, commanded by feudal barons, with masters under them to sail the vessels, gradually formed itself; and in 1215 was fought the first regular sea-fight worthy of the name, between England and France. This took place off the North Foreland. The English had thirty-six ships under Hubert de Burgh. They commenced the battle with a flight of arrows, and finished it by boarding with lance and axe. On boarding, they cut away the enemy's rigging, and brought his sails down upon him. The French had a much larger force, and many soldiers on board, so more than 125 of their knights were taken prisoners. Some of them leapt into the sea. This was a sea-fight, strictly and properly. It was fought in the open waters, and by vessels under sail; a stiff southerly breeze was blowing; and the success of the English force must be partly attributed to that *seamanship* which in after ages was to help the islanders to so many victories. It was long, however, before the *military* element in our fleets developed into a distinctly *naval* form and character. The earliest *admirals* (a word of Arabic origin) were barons, appointed indifferently to the command of fleets or armies; and from the first admiral whose commission is on record, A.D. 1303, we find a long list of names more familiar to us in association with the canvas of the tent than with the canvas of the mainsail. That noble type of character, thorough gentleman and thorough *skipper* in one, is perhaps not earlier than the reign of Elizabeth; and for generations after that, the fighting captain and the sailing captain of a man-of-war were often different persons.†

The greatest exploits of the feudal navy of England were performed in the reign of Edward the Third. On the 24th June, 1340, Edward attacked and conquered a French force of a hundred and ninety vessels, at Sluys, on the Flemish coast. The French lay at anchor in four divisions, their vessels being chained together with iron chains and cables. The English advanced with their largest ships loaded with archers in the van, while between each of these ships was a smaller one full of men-at-arms. As they closed with the enemy, amidst a shower of arrows and other missiles, they flung out grappling-irons and hooks. Vessel seized vessel in a desperate grip, and the men-at-arms boarded with sword, and hatchet,

* Sir Harris Nicolas.—This excellent antiquary was the first man to investigate in the old records the rise of the navy of England.

† I have no doubt that our office and title of *master* (*see* "Inner Life of a Man-of-War," *Cornhill Magazine*, vol. vii. p. 172) are relics of the old distinction.

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and lance. Then began a terrible hand-to-hand fight, led by those stately chevaliers whose armour glitters so brightly in the many-hued prose—rich with heraldic *or* and *gules*—of Froissart. Fitzalans and Bohuns, Beauchamps and Staffords, the renowned Sir Walter Manny, the renowned Sir John Chandos, laid about them lustily and well. "At sea," says Froissart, "fights are more fierce and severe than on land, for there is no retreating or flying, but every one must fight and take his chance." The French fought well, and the battle lasted for several hours. But when their first line had been carried by boarding, the divisions behind it tried to get away. The English pressed round them, however, and the carnage was tremendous. Men rushed to the boats, which filled and sank beneath the weight of the crowds that hurried into them. Many leapt into the sea. The victory was so complete, that nearly every ship of the French was taken or destroyed, while their two admirals and many thousands of their men were slain. This, it will be observed, was a half-military sea-fight—reminding us of some of the battles gained by Rome during the Punic Wars. That which Edward fought ten years afterwards—in August, 1350—with a Spanish squadron off Winchelsea, was more purely naval. The Spaniards were already famous for those large castellated war-ships which two centuries afterwards were to meet so disastrous a fate from battle and storm. Edward left Winchelsea to meet them in his "cog," the *Thomas*—a favourite ship of his Majesty's. Forty great Spanish vessels came down upon his squadron with a fair wind, their "tops" full of soldiers; and the one selected by the king to fight with struck his vessel so heavily that it afterwards sank. The king, however, had meanwhile carried a Spaniard by boarding, and continued the fight from his prize. While the heroic father was thus engaged, the heroic son—the Black Prince—was equally busy in another part of the squadron. After a severe action, they defeated the enemy, taking twenty-four or twenty-six vessels from them. Such was the end of the battle of "Espagnols-sur-Mer, as it was called." Edward's subjects hailed him as "Sovereign of the Sea"—a title which he and his successors accepted, if not in form, yet in actual fact. The result of the long roll of triumphs of the British flag on salt water was gradually to establish the doctrine of British superiority in the Four Seas. Our ancestors required every ship that met them to "dip" flag or topsail in recognition of this claim; and when the Dutch resolved to go to war with us in the seventeenth century, it was by refusing the "honour of the flag" (as it was called) that they brought it on. The question was fought out both with pen and sword. The broadsides of Selden against Grotius were the forerunners of the broadsides of Blake against Tromp.

In the fights of the feudal navy which I have thus loosely sketched, seamanship undoubtedly went for something. Superior readiness to fight on the unstable element was seamanship in itself. But even so late as the Armada days (1588) the seamanship was rather that of ship against ship than of squadron against squadron. The unwieldiness of the Spanish

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vessels, with their high castles and heavy tops, gave a great advantage to the Drakes, Frobishers, and Seymours, who played about them as they pleased—"hitting and getting away," as the prize-fighters have it. Our Elizabethan vessels, however inferior to the monsters of the deep now in fashion, were on a much larger scale than those of the Plantagenets. In Edward the Third's time, a 300-ton ship was something bulky and stately; while Frobisher's ship, the *Triumph*, was of 1,100, and Hawkins's ship, the *Victory*, was of 800 tons. These were the leaders of the whole force, however, and England was saved by craft, many of them not larger than colliers, and some of them mere pleasure-boats which the gallant English gentry chartered for themselves when they heard the roar of cannon from the coasts of Dorset. The Armada affair, in fact, was a long, desultory fight, carried on from the mouth of the Channel up to Calais Roads. It began on the 31st July, a Sunday, when a hundred and thirty-six sail of the Spaniards was sighted off the Cornish coast. They were moving in the form of a crescent, seven miles wide from horn to horn. The English were only sixty-seven strong, and took good care not to permit a general engagement with an enemy superior in numbers, greater in size, and heavier in armament. So they stuck to their rear, and in that quarter gave the Spaniards some ugly injuries. The second day, both fleets continuing to go up Channel with a westerly breeze, the English kept to windward, but made no attack. But on the Monday a change of wind had given the Spaniards the weather-gage. Englishmen have always loved the weather-gage, which enables the force enjoying it to bring on a fight. They manœuvred for it now, but the Spaniard kept his advantage, and presently commenced an assault. His ponderous and pompous galleons—the *St. Matthew*, the *St. Philip*, the *St. James*, &c.—would fain have closed with our *Bull*, and *Bear*, and *Tiger*, and *Dreadnought*. But this, where the inequality of size and armour was great, was not the English game. The English fought like wasps—stinging while on the wing; and though the cannon practice was not what it became in after ages, yet it and the national seamanship together secured the advantage to the English flag. So the week went on, the heaviest fighting being on the Thursday; and on Saturday the Armada anchored in the Road of Calais. Here Parma was to have joined it; to prevent which junction our stout allies, the Dutch, were now watching the coast of the Low Countries. But a handful of fire-ships prepared in the Thames struck the Spaniards with a panic which was in itself ruin. They cut their cables and fled, many of them drifting on shore. The others made for the northward, and soon afterwards both fleets fought a pitched battle off Gravelines. The English tactics were still the same—to shun closing, and to trust to smart firing, combined with a sailorly command of position. And they were completely successful. Men in the Spanish fleet, who had fought at Lepanto, said that the fighting that day was far severer.* Sixteen of their

* MOTLEY'S *United Netherlands*, ii., p. 500. He gives the best account we have of these operations.

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best ships were, indeed, destroyed, with a loss of 4,000 to 5,000 soldiers killed—for the Armada, we must remember, was a fleet and an army in one. The south-wester now began to blow, and with heavy hearts the Dons found themselves moving farther and farther from their pleasant orange-trees, towards the cold, grim, hungry Northern Sea. By the 14th of August it was blowing a tremendous gale, which lasted in successive spasms all the month ; and the Invincible Armada left its bones on many a black Northern shore, from Norway to the Hebrides.

Next to the storm, England was most indebted for aid on this occasion to the Dutch, whose blockade of the Duke of Parma had been of the most essential service. Nevertheless, the middle of the following century found the two great sea and Protestant Powers engaged in the deadliest strife—in perhaps the fiercest contest that has been waged on the waters in modern times. It was a downright struggle for commercial supremacy. Holland, fresh from her long contest with Spain, rose in the space of a generation or two to a prosperity of which the world had had no example. The great bulk of the carrying trade of the world was in her hands. Her swarms of seamen bred by this trade, and by her immense fisheries, were officered by Tromps and De Ruyters—admirals equal to any that the world ever saw. While England was convulsed by the Civil War, and her ships engaged in watching the Channel for the Parliament, Holland's prosperity steadily increased, and with her prosperity her disinclination to recognize English supremacy, or to yield the palm of commerce to English enterprise. The Commonwealth's Navigation Act of 1651 brought to a climax a long acccumulation of jealousies and discontents, and in May, 1652, Tromp came over with forty sail to Dover Road, provoked Blake to fire at his flag by refusing the "honour," and returned the compliment with a broadside. Blake (who had gone to sea as a landsman at fifty years of age three years before) fought him till nightfall, when the squadrons separated, both heavily hit. This was the prologue to a great play. Few people know the magnificent scale on which the war that followed was fought, or even remember the names of the gallant old English seamen who fought it. Blake still waits a biographer worthy of him; while Penn, Ascue, Batten, and Lawson, are forgotten. Strange! The most characteristic part of our history is that which is worst represented in our literature!

Of *the scale* of this first Dutch war, it is sufficient to say that, in the battle of the North Foreland, the Dutch were sixty sail strong; that in that of Portland, each fleet was seventy sail strong; while the battle of the Texel saw a hundred vessels engaged on each side. In this last engagement, or series of engagements, the great Tromp was slain, six English captains fell, and six were wounded. The Dutch lost twenty-six men-of-war burnt and sunk. Many ships were blown up. Some were taken by boarding, retaken, and then captured after all. The sea was strewn with wrecks and corpses. Gunnery had now become a greater power; the combatants were well matched in seamanship, and in a tough,

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dogged ferocity; and fleet-manœuvring, partly owing to the Dutch, was far better understood than ever—if we can say that it had ever been understood before. In earlier ages, the British skipper, as in 1588, no doubt handled his ship admirably; but when squadrons fought, they seem to have fought pell-mell. The Dutch wars of the seventeenth century first showed what may be gained by handling a fleet as a whole, and ordering a line of ships as a general orders a line of regiments. When in the course of the second of these wars, which broke out after the Restoration, we happened to get worsted, Pepys records how Sir William Penn, a thoroughbred seaman and a hero of both wars, accounted for it. "He says that we must fight in a line; whereas we fought promiscuously, to our utter and demonstrable ruin; the Dutch fighting otherwise, *and we, whenever we beat them.*" (Pepys' *Diary*, July 4, 1666.) The obscurity which gathered over the great doings of the Commonwealth's times during the last century, kept the supreme importance of these battles with the Dutch in the background. Accordingly, when John Clerk of Eldin published his celebrated treatise on *Naval Tactics*, in 1782, he seems to have quite overlooked the fact that his favourite manœuvre, the breaking of the line, had been known to the Tromps, De Ruyters, Penns, and Blakes. It is mentioned by Father Paul Hoste, in his work on *Naval Evolutions*, which appeared at the end of the seventeenth century.* That century may claim the credit of having laid the foundation of the science of naval tactics, which is never now studied without a reference to precedents and principles then first taught or practised. Tromp's retreat with a convoy of merchantmen, after the battle of Portland, in February, 1653, is still regarded as a model of consummate nautical skill, and could not be improved upon if it had to be done over again to-morrow. The century was worthily wound up by the great operations off La Hogue, in 1692. The English and Dutch put to sea in a combined fleet of ninety-nine line-of-battle ships, and fell in with De Tourville, the French admiral, on the 19th May. Our countrymen formed in line as usual, and—what was much less common—allowed the French to make the attack. Had De Tourville pushed for the centre, and cut the English line, it might have gone hard with us, for the light wind was stilled by the firing, and our rear and van could not have come up to help. But he contented himself with bringing-to to windward, and cannonading, and no decisive result followed. The fleets were separated by the darkness, and next day the French were chased, without much being done. The result, however, was to drive them right on to the Norman coast, where several of them grounded; and, finally, an attack was made upon them off La Hogue, when at anchor, with boats and fire-ships, and sixteen large vessels were taken or burnt. Stern old

* Among the curiosities of this subject is the fact that the two most famous writers on Naval Tactics have been landsmen—Hoste, a French Jesuit, and Clerk, a Scottish laird.

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Benbow distinguished himself very much in the course of this war. He was what in those days was called a *tarpawlin*—a thorough seaman, and only a seaman; had been bred in the merchant-service (as was not then uncommon); and was a tough, plain, indomitable sailor of the old world. He was killed in the West Indies by a chain-shot, in August, 1702, in a fight in which two of his captains, Kirby and Wade, behaved so badly that they were afterwards executed by sentence of court-martial. Both events were celebrated in one of the curious old songs of our navy, *e.g.*:—

> Our admiral met his lot,
> From a chain-shot, from a chain-shot.
>
> Says Kirby unto Wade,
> Let us run, let us run! &c. &c.

The sea-fights in the earlier wars of the last century, and down as far as Rodney's time, were generally inferior in every kind of interest and importance to the great combats of its last years, and of the opening of the century in which we live. Naval tactics were not sufficiently studied. Our old and chief enemies, the French, contrived to get ahead of us in ship-building, and, by a careful regard for themselves in the points in which they were weak, managed to avoid general and decisive actions with much dexterity. A certain pedantry, too, crept over some of our admirals, and indisposed them to try innovations on the more obvious and familiar methods of handling a fleet in battle. The orthodox course was to sail in divisions in the following fashion :—

Vengeance	*Indefatigable*
Belleropohn	*Benbow*
Antigone	*Middlesex*
&c.	&c.

When an enemy was to be engaged, the fleet formed a line—the *line of battle*—from which vessels seventy-four guns and upwards took their designation of *line-of-battle ships*. The position to windward or weather-gage was always struggled for, as securing the opportunity of attack. When it was obtained, the English bore down to assail the enemy, and the favourite object was to pass his stern, raking him; to luff up under his lee; and, after pouring in broadsides, to board, if necessary or convenient. Many an enemy has been captured by this good old plan, carried out with rapidity, vigour, and a brisk heavy fire. But there was a considerable interval during the eighteenth century, when the French, having good ships and good gunnery, succeeded in keeping our fleets from coming to close quarters, and deprived us of any but those indecisive triumphs which so irritate (not always reasonably) John Bull. They used to receive the attack to leeward, and to disable our vessels by carrying away their spars, as we advanced presenting a good mark, head foremost. So well was this defensive game played that it embarrassed our best admirals. Nor did they find the sentences passed on their failures of a nature to reassure them. Admiral Matthews

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was disgraced in 1744 for too much rashness. Admiral Byng was shot in 1757 for too much caution.

It was the occurrence of a succession of indecisive battles with the French during the first American War that led to the publication of Clerk of Eldin's well-known and influential book in 1782. He instanced Keppel's action off Ushant, Byron's off Grenada, and several others, and set himself not only to explain the failures, but to propose a remedy. His remedy was, that instead of attacking with the whole line, ship to ship, as usual, from windward, our admirals should direct all their attention to breaking the enemy's line, and cutting off a portion of it by a concentration of force. How far this doctrine was the real inspiration of Rodney's success over the Comte de Grasse on the 12th April, 1782, will probably always be a disputed question. But of the great influence of Clerk's book on the profession, there can be no doubt. It gave a stimulus to the whole subject. It was favourite reading with many great naval chiefs—Nelson himself, for one. A greater variety was introduced into our sea-fights from this time, especially during the Revolutionary War—far the greatest naval epoch since the epoch of Blake. On the glorious 1st of June, 1794, Admiral Howe, after three days of partial fighting and beautiful evolutions, bore down upon twenty-six French sail, broke their line, routed them utterly, and brought six line-of-battle ships into Spithead. On St. Valentine's day, 1797, Sir John Jervis encountered twenty-five Spanish ships-of-the-line with fifteen of his own, off the well-remembered Cape St. Vincent. The Spaniards were in loose order, and Jervis determined that they should have no time to remedy it. He came on under a press of sail, close-hauled upon the starboard tack, separated the divisions which the Spanish admiral would have liked to re-unite, and then tacked upon the larger of the two. Nelson and Collingwood were among the first captains engaged in this action, in which Nelson made one of his most characteristic movements, by "wearing" without orders, on his own responsibility, at a critical period of the day. Four large Spanish ships were taken. The battle of St. Vincent in February was followed by the battle of Camperdown in October, and the Nile followed Camperdown within a year. So thick lie the glories of that great period! Camperdown was a very brilliant action. Duncan found the Dutch on their own coast, made the signal for *close* action without waiting to form line, broke through the line of the enemy, and defeated them to leeward in only nine fathoms water, on a lee shore! Nelson wrote to him, afterwards, that he had "profited by his example"—and there was a strong similarity between Camperdown and the Nile. The Nile remains the standing example of the "attack at anchor." Nelson went *inside* the French fleet, and fell upon their van and centre with a superior force, at six o'clock in the evening. To *double* on an enemy by taking up positions into which only superior seamanship would carry a fleet, was the constant policy of Nelson, whose *forte* lay in the union of subtle calculation with supreme daring. "What I like in the Nile," said

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a surviving officer of those great days to the present writer, "is that it was mainly won by *head-piece!*" The roll of victories was closed, in the way we all remember, at Trafalgar, in 1805. This is probably the only great sea-fight some distinct impression of which is generally diffused. Collingwood's incomparable despatch belongs to literature, and will live as long as the speeches of Burke or the poems of Gray. Every educated man knows that the French and Spanish line formed "a crescent convexing to leeward," and that the British attacked in columns, of which Nelson led the weather one and Collingwood the lee. Here, too, the enemy's line was broken, and at the very beginning of the day. Our naval glory culminated in this imperial fight, to which nothing was wanting. The two greatest admirals of the age—one of them the greatest admiral of any age—were present. The management of the entire fleet was equalled only by the conduct of individual ships. The ruin of the enemy was so thorough, that twenty sail-of-the-line were captured or destroyed. Nelson's wonderful signal before the battle gave it the dignity of noble and inspired thought; his death at its close threw over it a poetry full of mournful beauty as a storm-darkened sea.

What are the reflections with which one concludes this review of the sea-fights of so many ages—in an age of which the naval history is embodied in the one word, "change?"

First. A consolatory one. Change has all along been a law actively operating in things naval; but the genius of the sea-races has never been destroyed by it. The men who conquered afloat in row-boats with spear and battle-axe were the same men who conquered afterwards in one-masted galleys with crossbow and lance; and, again, as the ages rolled by, with culverins, in small bluff-bowed merchant-ships; and, again, in stately seventy-fours, with fleet-manœuvring and fine gunnery. Jervis did not beat the Spaniards more thoroughly than the Black Prince. Duncan did not beat the Dutch more decidedly than Blake. Nelson did not destroy the French more effectually than Edward the Third. Was the change from Edward's "Cog," the *Thomas*, to Nelson's *Victory*, not as great as the change from Nelson's *Victory* to the *Warrior* and the *Black Prince?* Is steam a more potent force in Nature than Genius; or iron harder than the pluck of the British Tar? Whom will these great demons serve faithfully but the wizards who best know how to bring them under control? On the abstract ground of analogy, on the concrete ground of history, things ought to stimulate us to hopeful ingenuity, not to agitate us with the weak forebodings so apt to flutter down into despair.

Meanwhile, change is the dominant law. The age of sea-fights by sailing-vessels is practically over. Those beautiful evolutions of the old world, the struggle for the weather-gage, the tacking in succession, the expansion from columns into lines, the wearing in graceful circles of white-sailed vessels, agile in their sweep as birds, are gone not less completely than the minuets and galliards of the dance, or the ladies who

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danced them with the conquerors of the Armada. The Trafalgars of the future will be fought with steamers—iron-plated steamers, too—since however the question may turn out between ships and forts, ships will certainly be iron-plated against each other. The wind will be only important as a part of the weather, and steam will be to the modern man-of-war what oars were to the ancient trireme—the beak, or ram-like weapon, being common to both. Our descendants will probably see fleets going into action without masts at all; dark bodies of mighty bulk, rushing at a rate which sailing-vessels never attained, battling each other like bulls in the strife, with a roar of artillery beyond the roaring of all the herds of Bashan. But if the old evolutions are superseded, will no evolutions be witnessed at all? Far from it. On the contrary, it is not improbable that steam warfare may give rise to a school of naval tactics more fertile in combinations than that of the Hostes and Clerks. For it will always be indispensable to attack your enemy's squadron to advantage; to double on him, and destroy one part of him by superior force before help can come up; to separate his portions, to break his lines, to parry his thrust, to out-steam him.

All these operations are either the same as the old manœuvres in character, or they resemble them; and the difference only is, that they will be performed by the help of a new agency—a novel propelling power. The skill, therefore, known as seamanship will simply have to be employed under new conditions, and, *cæteris paribus*, the chief new condition depends on the quality of the steamers each nation builds. Speed in a war-steamer, for instance, will be of supreme importance; and it is pleasant to know that the *Warrior*, though slow under canvas, steams fifteen knots. As England, then, builds the largest number of them, one condition of the warfare of the future is very much under her own control. The rest, including the question of evolutions, is a matter of care and study. The Admiralty ought to form an iron-clad squadron, and exercise it as a squadron for experiment's sake. The late Sir Howard Douglas opened the subject by a very admirable treatise.* Sir Howard preferred for steam squadrons going into action the formation known as the *échelon* movement. He was for placing the vessels on what are called *bow-and-quarter lines*—with the bow and quarter of each vessel facing the quarter and bow of the one next it. It is difficult to make such technicalities intelligible without diagrams. But if you try and imagine a squadron advancing towards you, with the first ship of each batch forming the point of a triangle, and the two last behind forming the angles at the base, you will get some notion of it. But these speculations are for professional men; nor has my ambition in this paper extended beyond an attempt to give a popular account of the chief forms that fighting by sea has assumed amongst the most important nations of the world.

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* *On Naval Warfare by Steam.* 1858.

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The House of Commons: From the Ladies' Gallery.

This does not pretend to be a political article. The writer has a decided objection to women who

Talk of things that they don't understand;

and seldom can any woman really understand politics. The cool, clear, large brain, the steady judgment, the firm, unimpassioned, yet not untender heart, is a combination of qualities which very few among men, fewer still among women, can boast. And this alone justifies an individual in taking part in, or even criticizing those who do take part in guiding the vessel of the State and governing the destinies of nations. To be a truly great politician is so grand a thing, that to be a small one appears simply ridiculous; and perhaps a political woman is the most ridiculous of all. Unless, indeed—which is the only excuse for exceptional women—Providence has endowed her with a man's brain, and something of a man's nature. It is so often. As we see womanish men, so we sometimes see manly, nay "very gentlemanly" women; and then it becomes a question whether both they, and society, are not safest in following out, under certain limitations, the law of their individual natures, so far as it can be done without injury to the general well-being of the community. This, possibly, is the golden mean into which the great contest now pending between the total repression and unlimited emancipation of women will subside.

But to our article: which assumes—shall we say presumes?—to give a woman's view—unbiassed, and absolutely unpolitical—of that great deliberative assembly, perhaps the greatest in all the world—the British House of Commons.

Our Saxon ancestors evidently thought that this feminine view was quite unnecessary; that our sex's opinion concerning them, or our presence among them, was a matter to be tacitly ignored. Our business as *ladies*—(the Saxon word means "loaf-givers")—was to rule the household, to rear the children, to instruct duly the dependent maidens, to look after the poor and the helpless, and especially the sick; enough, one would think, to occupy fully any woman's life. They—our forefathers—certainly did not contemplate our doing as some of us now-a-days are understood to desire—take our seats and make speeches in Parliament. Nay, they only in later times allowed us even to hear their speeches; and Sir Charles Barry, carrying out this ungallant tradition, has made the Ladies' Gallery of the House of Commons very comfortable indeed within, but without, not much better than a wire cage. Let us flatter ourselves that this is a matter of self-preservation, lest honourable Members should be led

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astray from their duties, blinded by the blaze of beauty, or beguiled by the tenderness beaming from sympathetic eyes. In the meantime here we are; enclosed like beautiful but obnoxious animals, and tamely investigating through our bars the nobler animals below.

But before reaching this elegant den we have had various long galleries to traverse, and staircases to climb, where every accidental masculine eye regards us doubtfully and condescendingly, as if to say—"Ladies, you must be aware that you are here quite on sufferance." We did not mind. Armed with an honourable ticket of admission, we penetrated, glad and grateful, to our sanctum, and there prepared to spend an evening, which was expected to be, and has since become, a matter of history.

It was the night—now many months ago—when the British Government made its manifesto on the subject of Italian liberty. Every available space that could afford a hearing for man or for woman, was eagerly sought; and though we ourselves—let us contritely confess—cared but little for the great question of the night, still there was a pleasurable excitement in feeling ourselves part and portion of the national assembly, and in peering down through our gilded bars at the gradually filling House, and the already crowded Strangers' Gallery opposite. The Ladies' Gallery, whatever it may look from thence—within, be it known to all inquirers, is exceedingly comfortable. It consists of three divisions—two public boxes, to which every Member of the House has the privilege of giving a limited number of admissions nightly, and the Speaker's box, which is private, like a *loge* at the Opera. Behind it is a small, well-appointed sitting-room; and farther away, for general benefit, is—oh, let us thank the lords of creation for this!—a kitchen, whence comes the refreshing clatter of tea-cups and saucers. We consoled ourselves that the long evening we were prepared to spend—it was then six P.M., and the House was not expected to rise till three A.M.—would not be spent in total starvation. But—alas for another feminine weakness!—we saw inscribed in every available position, the ominous, not to say impertinent, words, "*Silence is requested.*" Could we—I put it to the sympathizing public—be expected to hold our tongues for nine mortal hours?

However, we determined to try; and took our places, so as to obtain the widest and most satisfactory view possible of the scene beneath.

A large, well-proportioned, simply yet tastefully decorated hall, through the coloured windows of which the April sunset glow streamed down on to "the floor of the house," where a notable Irish Member once expressed his intention to die. He might have died in a more uncomfortable place; for it is well matted and broad, while from either side of it rise in tiers the well-known "benches"—"Ministerial" and "Opposition." They are of green leather—comfortable, well stuffed; with plenty of room for honourable gentlemen to lounge and loll in, as some hundred or so were now doing. In this intermediate space a few figures moved about—Members taking their seats, or officials carrying messages to and fro. The

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business of the night had begun, and there was a certain vocal murmur floating about, but if any particular Member were then speaking, neither we, nor apparently the House, much noticed him. Our first attention was caught by the sight directly opposite us—the Strangers' Gallery.

Probably on every night, but especially on an important night like this, there are few places in London which afford a better study of character than the Strangers' Gallery of the House of Commons. The variety of heads would have delighted a painter. There was the sharp Londoner, free and easy, well accustomed to this, as to most other sights, and taking it merely as a matter of business. There was the sober, stolid country visitor, a good deal awed, but full of importance; who, no doubt, had hunted out and worried "our Member" no little, to get admission to this privileged spot, where, after being wedged in tightly and uncomfortably for a whole night, he might attain the honour and glory of taking back to "our borough" a full, true, and particular account of what the Member did and said, and how he looked, and how exceedingly attentive or inattentive, as might be, he was to his constituent. Sprinkled among these, the middle class—or rather below the middle class—of metropolitans and provincials, were a few heads of higher order, acute, intelligent, refined, appertaining, you saw at a glance, to scholars and gentlemen, who had friends in the House, in whose success, or in the success of the cause, they were vitally interested. And one small atom in the audience, specially noticeable because his light-coloured feminine petticoats broke the monotonous line of masculine costume, was a pretty little boy, placed beside a fashionable, handsome young man, who guarded him paternally, and pointed out everything to him in a way that was charming to witness. Who knows but that the mighty brain of some great statesman, who,

When we all lie still,

shall wield the destinies of Europe, may lurk undeveloped under those soft shining curls and intent childish eyes?

But from this pleasant sight (to a woman at least) we turned our gaze to what we had especially come to see—the House, the legislative assembly of our native land. Externally, there was no call for enthusiasm. Not even the memories of a generation hung about these glaringly new walls. This was not the classic spot whence Chatham was borne out dying: where Fox and Pitt, whose wonderfully characteristic statues now stand in ever-silent opposition in the gallery below, fought out their never-ceasing battles; where Burke rolled out his sonorously elegant periods, Sheridan startled and dazzled with his useless ephemeral brilliance, and Canning charmed both friends and enemies, by the polish and grace of an eloquence, remembered lovingly by many still alive. No—here was nothing to awaken either archæological or historical fervour. Here was merely a well-adorned, very comfortable modern hall, where an assemblage of very comfortable-looking gentlemen disposed themselves in all varieties of attitude. Every costume, from the easy morning-coat to the full-dress black suit—from the stylish attire of the young man, whom

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the detestable slang of the day would term "a swell," to the solidly-respectable dress of the old-fashioned English gentleman,—was represented here. Every age, too, from twenty-five to eighty; and almost every class—educated, uneducated; stupid, intelligent; patrician, plebeian; for the one leveller—money, which only too often brings a man into Parliament, ceases its power when the glory of election is over, and he comes to sit on these formidable green benches—a single individual, upon whose personal talent it alone depends, whether he shall become of any weight in the House and the world, or sink ignominiously into a mere "Ay" or "No" of a division. Still, taking the average of these men, and judging them—utterly unknown to us as they were—only by their externals, there seemed a fair proportion of honest-looking, intelligent, and truly gentlemanly English gentlemen, such as could fairly be trusted with that responsibility which the British House of Commons has wielded, in all generations, as almost the strongest, perhaps the very strongest, power in the nation.

As our perceptions, at first slightly confused by the novelty of the scene, began to right themselves, we caught certain sonorous sounds arising from below, and distinguished, among the moving figures in the centre of the House, one stationary figure, which, gesticulating slightly, tried to make itself heard. We became aware that an honourable Member was "on his legs"—is not that the phrase?—and striving to gain "the ear of the House"—which mysterious organ appeared to suffer from chronic neuralgia. Nevertheless the present speaker—Sir George Bowyer we heard he was—seemed a worthy gentleman, very much in earnest; and this earnestness won, from his most uproarious opponents, a certain genial personal respect. Still, his whole speech of—how many?—hours' duration, could, we solemnly aver, have been easily condensed—facts, arguments, applications and all—into one half-hour of blessed brevity; or, to put the thing professionally, into four printed pages large octavo, or two of ordinary Magazine type. Repetitions innumerable, every idea reappearing again and again, clothed in slightly altered phraseology; assertions given for arguments, and invective for simple statements; involutions and divergencies interminable, till the original subject was buried under one mass of inextricable confusion—this was the impression his speech made upon the unprejudiced feminine mind. It grieves us to have to say it, but so it was. The advisability of first knowing clearly what one had to say, of saying it as tersely, lucidly, and briefly as possible, and then sitting down again, never seemed to present itself to the honourable gentleman's imagination. And yet he was a most honourable and sincere gentleman, and it was quite pathetic to see the mingled dignity and patience with which he bore the House's ironical cheers or laughter at his various blunders and hesitations. If a wrong-headed, he was certainly a much-enduring man, with courage and self-possession worthy of a better cause.

What—are we turning political? Does the strong revulsion which

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the House evidently shows against a speech defending pope and tyrant, Pio Nono and Bomba of Naples, rouse in us a spirit of partisanship? We fear so. We begin to feel our hearts warm in the contest—our staunch, liberty-loving, Protestant hearts; and we listen to this not too dangerous champion of a creed outworn, who has just thrown down the glove of the evening, with an angry intentness equal to that of Parliament itself.

Nevertheless, after its occasional but unmistakeable expression of opinion, the House seemed to take the matter very quietly, as if well accustomed to that sort of thing. It suffered the honourable Member to go mildly meandering on, while it listened or lounged, exchanged messages, notes, or *sotto voce* conversation, with a nonchalance that in most public meetings would be considered, to say the least, rather peculiar. Occasional murmurs of "Hear, hear," "Oh, oh," "Order," were the only signs that Parliament was condescending to pay any attention at all. In truth, it somewhat surprised us ignorant women, who expected to behold a body of men concentrating every energy of their powerful minds on the government of their country, to see the easy, not to say "free-and-easy," demeanour, the want of dignity and gravity, and the total absence of anything like Areopagite solemnity in the British House of Commons.

When the long-winded baronet at length concluded, a sigh of relief seemed to flutter through the House, and was undoubtedly echoed in the Ladies' Gallery. Then, after a slight confusion, unintelligible save to parliamentary ears, another Member rose to speak. Rose—first placing his stalwart figure in an apparently well-considered oratorical attitude—like a man who was, or, at any rate, believed himself to be, perfectly master of his subject and of himself; and, certainly, his first sentence made it apparent that, if not an orator, he was a capital speaker, with the faculty of lucidly expressing original and valuable thoughts. He began composedly, but gradually waxed more and more vehement; clenching each of his arguments—and they were terse and clear, fortified by a groundwork of apt and well-put facts—by striking his two hands together with a noise that resounded through the whole House, causing us continually to lose the thread of discourse in counting the minutes that would elapse before the next blow came. If this periodical manual exercise is the constant habit of the honourable Member—Mr. Layard of Nineveh—the uninitiate female mind would humbly suggest that it does not in the least improve his oratory, and is very disturbing to the nerves of his listeners.

Another fact, which in this and in succeeding speeches struck us with considerable amazement, was the extreme latitude with which M.P.'s abuse and insult one another. Anything short of actually giving the lie seems to be quite "parliamentary." Scarcely less than this was both expressed and implied by Mr. Layard to Sir George Bowyer—honourable Members must pardon the unparliamentary freedom taken with their names, names which, however, their career makes public property—yet

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the latter gentleman contented himself by ejaculating, with a stolid obstinacy truly British, the customary "No, no," and only once rose to explain, in the meekest manner, that, despite his political opinions he was not an absolute ruffian, deaf to all considerations of common sense, and common humanity. Indeed, when we had recovered from the effect of his prosy speech, our advocate of popes and tyrants displayed himself in such an amiable light, so patient of contumely, so steadfast to his own convictions, so forbearing to those of his opponents, that the respect with which the House regarded him, despite his little peculiarities, was not surprising to his audience in the Ladies' Gallery.

Our box was now filled. With whom, does not matter to the public. Suffice it that they were high-born beauties, bearing historical names; ancient gentlewomen, also beautiful, with that loveliness of matronly old age which is met nowhere as it is in England; and other honourable women—having a woman's interest in the House, which, as was natural, concentrated itself in one especial Member thereof. Alack! it will be so to the end of time. We—ay, the very best of us—will always have our deepest interests and our strongest opinions rooted in and governed by—not something, but *somebody*.

After an energetic speech, Mr. Layard sat down, and somebody else rose—who shall be left unrecorded, trusting that his oration was as satisfactory to himself as it undoubtedly was to other people. For it gave the House an opportunity for unanimous evasion. In a miraculously short space of time, yard after yard of empty green benches was ominously displayed, till only a few Members and the hapless Mr. Speaker remained as listeners. Uncheered by friends, unhissed by foes, the honourable Member blandly continued his speech, as if emulating Tennyson's brook—

> For men may come and men may go,
> But I go on for ever.

For how long he did go on this deponent cannot say, since we also took the opportunity of disappearing to—our tea! What private alarms beset us because spoons would strike resonantly against saucers, and knives would clatter down to the ground with a noise that we feared might be heard by the whole British Parliament, who had so imperatively commanded our "silence," need not time to confess. Enough that we subdued our terrors, took our meek and blameless repast; and much invigorated—as we trust were the nobler feeders below—we settled to the serious business of the evening.

The House, having dined, began to re-assemble. One Member, unknown to fame, who seemed of a practical turn, delivered himself of a few harmless remarks, chiefly arithmetical; and then another—not unknown—in a few brief, but telling sentences, given with classic grace—Mr. Monckton Milnes—spoke out his honest mind. Afterwards came a comic interlude, carried on between a large impulsive gentleman, who used language of the sledge-hammer style, and a mild, spare, politely irate partisan of Sir George Bowyer. These two fell upon one

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another so fiercely that at last they were decided to be "out of order"—which phrase seemed, in parliamentary etiquette, to allow of any vituperation short of one gentleman's calling another gentleman "a"—euphuistically speaking, a person who is not too particular in his attention to veracity.

This storm abated; with one or two more of a similar nature, for indeed they apparently formed part of the House's nightly entertainment. Another was, that several Members should get "on their legs" at the same time, when there ensued vociferous and contradictory calls for each, until the Speaker's fiat decided the matter. One Member, who was always "rising," seemed an especial pet of the House, and was continually called for; but whether to be listened to or laughed at, we could not determine. Parliament clearly liked to be amused, and darted upon the merest shadow of a joke with boyish avidity. Indeed, there was a strong "school-boy" element in this dignified assembly; and those whom nature or chance forbade to use their lungs for the benefit of the Reporters' Gallery and the public, evidently took a secondary pleasure in merely "making a noise."

And now the full House settled itself into post-prandial ease; ay, even the Member round whose devoted head had hurtled the chief artillery of the evening. Sir George Bowyer sat in his place, and gave no sign, save an occasional nervous patting of the back of his bench. He had faced his foes like a Briton; but perhaps he knew—what we did not—that "the greatest was behind."

A little man—or he seemed little, viewed from the altitude of the Ladies' Gallery—rose from the Government benches, and leaning his arm on the table before him, began to say a few words.

"Saying a few words" best expresses this commencement. So unobtrusive was it, that, until we noticed the sudden silence of intent attention which fell upon the House, we scarcely noticed *him* at all. Then we did.

Neither you nor I, good reader, ever heard Demosthenes or Cicero. Other lights of later date—Burke, Fox, Pitt, Sheridan, &c.—are likewise to us little better than myths of a departed age. Oratorical, like musical and dramatic glory, must always be taken by after generations entirely on trust. Daniel O'Connell is almost forgotten; and yet he was dubbed "orator" widely enough in his day. Not undeservedly. Even though you believed in your conscience that he was one of the greatest humbugs alive, and that three words out of every six he uttered were tainted with Irish "imaginativeness," still those words fell so honey-sweet, that you caught yourself listening with moist eye and beating heart, as if every syllable were true. Nay, his voice—just the mere organ—so thrillingly musical, so deeply pathetic—haunted you for hours after; even like that of the present Bishop of Oxford, which—

A lyre of widest range,

possesses the same inexplicable fascination, and could invest the com-

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monest language, the dryest, most uninteresting topic, with a charm all its own. He, like O'Connell, could almost "wile a bird off a bush."

But this man, *my* orator, the nearest approach to that ideal which we most of us have, and never expect to see realized, does not attempt to wile. He scarcely even condescends to persuade. He appeals simply to your reason, or rather, without any direct appeal, he lays before you what your reason at once acknowledges to be the truth, thereby, if he has any victory to gain, making yourself, not himself, your conqueror. Nor in the conflict does he use any ungenerous weapons. His fiercest anger is but the indignation of an honest man.

And an honest man both friends and enemies know him to be. Beyond this, the present—which, as at first stated, is in no way a political article—does not presume to judge him. Posterity will decide in what niche of his country's history to place the name of William Ewart Gladstone.

He began, as has been recorded, so unobtrusively as to be scarcely recognized; then with a grasp, ruthless as it was firm, he seized his adversary—Sir George Bowyer—and smote him hip and thigh with a great slaughter. Quite impersonally, the man being the mere embodiment of the cause; but he did it. Point by point he anatomized his whole speech, its contradictory facts and weak fallacious arguments; then caused the speaker to annihilate himself, to put the torch of truth to his own funeral pile, and reduce his speech, his principles, and all his surroundings to ignominious ashes. This done, the victorious orator went on his way amidst a storm of applause, for the House was now warmed up to the highest pitch of enthusiasm.

He let it subside a little, and then he burst—though still with calmness and dignity—into the free tide of an eloquence—

Strong without rage—without o'erflowing, full.

That line best expresses the peculiar character of his oratory. Strictly classic it is not, yet it has a flavour of Attic salt befitting one of the ripest scholars of the day. Nor is it plain Saxon, though fraught with a Saxon directness, simplicity, and earnestness, that none of your florid Southern or Celtic orators ever attain. Its grace is not injured, while its force is increased, by a slightly provincial tone—scarcely accent—which sometimes intrudes upon what would be otherwise the purest academic English. For his voice, without being noticeably mellifluous, it strikes one as emphatically a sincere voice: firm too—the voice of a man who possesses that strongest element of governing others—the power of being "fully persuaded in his own mind." You feel by instinct that whatever opinion he has arrived at is his real opinion, formed by calm, dispassionate, deliberate conviction; and once formed, will be abided by unswervingly and unhesitatingly to the end. This quality, the root of all moral and mental strength in any man, is doubtless the root of his, and of his power in the Government.

The House listened to him—as the House always does—with an

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intentness that his mere diplomatic position, and the importance of his speech, as the mouthpiece of the Government, could never have won. How we listened—we in the Ladies' Gallery—those present will long remember and rejoice. When he ended, the sudden silence felt like an actual pain; we knew well that never in all our lives might we hear the like again. The pause of regret, however, was broken by a naïve exclamation near us—

"Only look! Sir George has actually crossed the House and put his arm upon his shoulder."

And so it was. "He," the great orator, and evidently the one "he" in the world to his affectionate listener, sat in amiable confabulation with his late enemy, who had come over to him and laid his hand upon him—in amicable, not inimical intent. There they were, chatting and smiling together as if they had not been all this time at open warfare, tearing one another to pieces in the most gentlemanly manner—which manner long may they and the whole House retain! No harm can come if each valorous M.P. keeps up a true Briton's hearty respect for another equally true Briton who happens to hold a different opinion from himself.

With this little episode, characteristic in itself—touching, too, if one could dare to put into public print such sacred things as the tender pleasure of a woman's talk, the glad proud light beaming in a woman's eyes—our share in the night's proceedings unhappily terminated. It was long past midnight, and we were very weary, yet we shall always regret that we did not stay to hear the short decisive speech of Lord Palmerston, whose setting sun outshines many of the most brilliant luminaries of Parliament. But the life of the debate seemed to have ended with Gladstone; and besides we little cared to hear any other speaker: we rather wished to carry away with us, sharp and clear, the recollection of that wonderful speech which has now become matter of history, and which to us personally will always remain as our ideal of oratory—and an orator.

The Abbey towers showed distinct in the moonlight, and London streets were silent and empty, as we drove through the sleeping city into the region of green fields and gardens. Alas! we fear we shall never become politicians, or cease to take a much more vital interest in the destinies of our family and friends than in those of nations; yet we never see the debates (which, contritely be it owned, we seldom read) in *The Times* newspaper, without a vivid memory of our night in the Ladies' Gallery of the House of Commons.

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A Letter to a Saturday Reviewer.

SIR,—Unless strong internal evidence deceives me, you have twice done me the honour of discussing in the *Saturday Review* opinions which I have advanced on kindred though slightly different subjects in the *Cornhill Magazine*. In May, 1862, I wrote an article in this Magazine on "Superstition," which you criticized in an article entitled "Alleged Facts," in No. 341 of the *Saturday Review*. In June, 1863, I wrote an article on "Spiritualism," to which you (or some one not distinguishable from you in style and manner) replied in an article called "Eye-witnesses." The tone and manner of your criticisms leave nothing to be desired, but I am not satisfied with their substance. The subject of our controversy may be stated thus:—How does the improbability of a fact said to have been seen by a trustworthy person affect the credit to be attached to his assertion? Distinguish by the most careful statement between facts and inferences, choose witnesses above all suspicion, and give them every opportunity of complete and undisturbed observation, and is it possible to imagine any state of facts whatever so improbable that their unanimous and solemn assertion of its truth would not prove it to be true? To this question you answer No, and I answer Yes; subject, however, to limitations to which I think you hardly attended enough in your criticisms on what I wrote.

Before I enter more fully into this question, it may be worth while to say a few words on its importance. It is an argument on an extreme case, and, like all such arguments, may to many people appear superfluous. Such cases, however, are the tests by which principles are tried, and by which practical conduct has often to be regulated. The chances that neither you nor I will ever meet with five or six perfectly trustworthy witnesses combining to affirm an utterly incredible story are enormously great, but the case of one or two ordinary witnesses affirming very odd stories constantly arises, and as I showed in my article on "Spiritualism," the case of an affirmation, by three credible witnesses, that a man floated about in the air without any tangible or visible cause actually has arisen. It was asserted by Mr. Home, Dr. Gully, and a contributor to the *Cornhill Magazine*. Unless we have made up our minds as to the relative cogency of direct affirmation and extreme improbability, it is impossible to deal with such cases in a satisfactory way, and the extreme, the crucial case, is the only one which can give satisfaction on the subject.

The question between us thus resolves itself into the question, What is the ultimate ground of belief? why do people believe anything at all? and how are they to act when they are thrown back upon first principles? To this I answered, in my first article, "The ultimate reason for believing

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what is true is that experience shows that it is beneficial to do so. In all ordinary cases truth ought to be the sole object of our belief, because an enormously wide experience proves that it is wise and beneficial in the end, and with reference to the happiness of the world at large and to the general course of events, to follow truth under all circumstances, and at the expense of any conceivable amount of present sacrifice and discomfort. In cases, however, where we cannot discover the truth," [I should have added, "and yet are obliged to have an opinion,"] "we must revert to first principles, and believe that branch of the alternative presented to us which, upon the whole, it seems most desirable that we should believe." This is my principle. I will show its application immediately. What is yours? I have read both your articles more than once with great attention, and I cannot see how you solve the difficulty. The nearest approach to a statement of your principles which I can find, is contained in the following passages:—You say (May 10, 1862,) "Nor ought we to reject any sensual facts whatever if supported by good evidence. We want in the case of a very unusual and new phenomenon to get evidence which will exclude the hypotheses of imposture and unconscious self-deception. But if these are excluded, we must not hesitate to trust our senses, or the senses of those whose evidence would, according to the general results of human experience, be considered satisfactory." In your other article you say, "The acceptance of a certain amount of ocular testimony as proof of anything whatever which men can see, is the only course that is in keeping with the general drift of social life. All our inquiries into facts in common life rest on the supposition that if a due amount of evidence is forthcoming we have no choice but to believe."

You must forgive me for saying that these principles appear to me to be mere contrivances for eluding the difficulty which I have, at all events, tried to solve. You seem either to deny, or, at any rate, not to appreciate, the existence of the conflict between antecedent improbability and subsequent evidence. I do not for a moment say that the affirmation of what would commonly be called an impossibility by unimpeachable witnesses goes for nothing. On the contrary, it is an extraordinary fact, but so is the occurrence itself; and the reason why I hesitate to believe the statement is identical with the reason why I hesitate to disbelieve the witnesses. It is highly improbable that credible witnesses should lie. It is highly improbable that a dead body cut into four quarters should join itself together and walk about the house. You seem to say that the constitution of human affairs is such that a number of credible witnesses may always be assigned sufficiently great to make the improbability that they should all lie or be deceived greater than the improbability of any fact to which they are supposed to testify. You seem, in a word, to attribute to the direct assertion of a credible human being some sort of specific virtue; to assert that there is some other reason for believing it than the improbability that credible human beings should lie or be deceived; and to affirm that no other species of improbability, even if it implied a failure of all

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the established rules for the interpretation of nature, and the prediction of phenomena, can even be put into competition with it. This is the only meaning which I can put upon your statement that "the acceptance of a certain amount of ocular testimony as proof of anything whatever which men can see is the only course that is in keeping with the general drift of social life." I can understand this, and I can see how you come to take such a view. It is, as you say, "the only one that is in keeping with the general drift of social life;" but does the "general drift of social life" supply the rule to be followed in such matters? The sort of improbabilities of which, in social life, people allow themselves to be convinced by explicit testimony, are usually small matters, which deserve rather to be described as odd than as improbable. And it is natural enough that people who are continually in the habit of settling such matters by such an appeal should, in course of time, bring themselves to look upon it as the ultimate test of truth; but this is mere habit and practice: nor is it the habit or practice of the most enlightened part of the community.

Viewing the matter apart from "the general drift of social life," I must ask why you have any better right to say that you can always assign a sufficient number of witnesses to prove the truth of any statement, however strange, than I have to say that I can always imagine a state of facts too strange to be proved by the credit of the witnesses whom you assign. Such a contest would be puerile, and, in the strict sense of the word, insignificant. No man has, in reality, any distinct idea of the effect which is produced by the testimony of a vast number of witnesses. If you do not believe a statement deposed to by three or four respectable witnesses, you must be very oddly constituted if you would believe it upon the credit of seven; nor do I believe that there is any man living who would say, "Fourteen respectable witnesses failed to convince me that a dead man swam over the Straits of Dover with his head under his arm, but now that twenty-four have deposed to it, I am convinced."

There is another objection to your theory which appears to me decisive. How do you deal with the case of conflicting testimony? Suppose that, instead of opposing the express evidence of many eye-witnesses to antecedent improbability, you oppose it to the express evidence of an equal number of equally respectable eye-witnesses. How are you to act then? Ten men affirm upon oath that they were present, and heard a man say certain things on a certain occasion. Ten others swear that they also heard him, and that he did not say what is alleged, but that he did say something entirely different. It appears to me that, by your canon you are obliged to believe both that he did and that he did not say what he is said to have said.

The first series of witnesses prove that he said one thing, the second set prove that he did not say anything of the sort. Now, if either set had said that they saw him cut to pieces, and saw the pieces burnt in the fire, and then saw the ashes unite themselves again into a man, you, you say, would believe them. Why, then, should you not believe that he both

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spoke and did not speak at the same time? The only reason for not doing so is, that it is unlike all previous experience that contradictions should be true; but it is also unlike all previous experience that the other event should take place. I think, however, that no living creature would think of believing that both sets of witnesses spoke the truth. They would say, it is no doubt very odd, but there must be falsehood or error somewhere. It is less improbable that ten witnesses should lie than that a contradiction should be true. If then you come, after all, to a balance of improbabilities, how can you affirm that the improbability of the story told may not be greater than the improbability of the falsehood or error of the witnesses? But this is opposed to the foundation of your theory, which is, that human assertion deserves credit, apart from the question of the balance of probabilities.

You come, then, to balancing improbabilities, but how do you mean to set about it? How will you find out whether, for instance, it is more likely that two unimpeachable witnesses should join to tell a lie, or that a child a month old wrote Latin verses; that four such witnesses should lie, or that a man hanged for murder should come down from the gallows of himself, and walk into his coffin; that twenty such witnesses should lie, or that two and two, on a given occasion, made five? To ask such questions is like asking how much a pound is a fair price for friendship, or what is the distance from one o'clock to London Bridge.

The truth, I think, is that the force of specific evidence to particular facts is very limited, and that all our notions of its cogency are founded upon the tacit assumption that it is confined within a comparatively narrow range of probability or improbability. As soon as you get beyond this range, you are in reality in an unknown country, and when you affect to be balancing conflicting probabilities, you are really talking about you know not what. No doubt you agree with me that it is highly improbable that an arm-chair should preach a sermon. I agree with you that it is highly improbable that ten honest men should unite to tell a lie, and if the honest men assert that they heard the chair preach, we both agree to take the view which involves the less improbability. How are we to set about finding out which of the two things is least improbable? There may, no doubt, be secrets in heaven and earth, utterly unknown hitherto to all the world, which may produce the phenomenon of a preaching arm-chair. There may also be causes of an equally recondite character which may produce the phenomenon of a common delusion, or tendency to falsehood, besetting ten trustworthy and honest men at the same moment. Which is the more likely supposition? If you can tell, I cannot. It appears to me like asking whether it is more probable that an aristocratic government is established in the moon, or a democracy in the planet Mars. The value of human testimony depends upon the assumption that it applies to the ordinary established state of things. Try to prove prodigies and miracles as you prove contracts or crimes, and you take it out of its depth, and apply it to purposes for which it was never intended. A

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Roman Catholic once asked a lady of my acquaintance what she should think if God Almighty told her that the lamp on the table was an armed man? She replied, "I should think I was going out of my wits." The answer seemed to me perfectly true and conclusive. All our thoughts are bounded by a certain horizon, and founded upon certain tacit assumptions. Carry us beyond this limit, and we are at sea, without rudder or compass. There is, I think, in one of Dr. Livingstone's books, a practical illustration of this, which always struck me as not only instructive, but affecting. A native who had come with Dr. Livingstone from the interior of Africa went with him on board a steamer. As he came to see what a wonderful place he had got into, and how all his former notions were upset, he first lost his spirits, and at last went out of his mind, jumped overboard, and was drowned. The poor man's sensibility deserved a better fate, but his catastrophe sets in a striking light the bewilderment which is not only the natural but the only possible result of a harsh and sudden collision between evidence and probability, between the anticipations derived from the past and immediate present experience.

I am well aware of the argument which writers on your side of the question always put forward upon this subject. You dwell upon great scientific discoveries, and ask whether upon the principles which I advocate a wise man ought not to have discredited every invention of modern times. Are not the results produced by steam engines, electric telegraphs, the use of chloroform, and many other things of the same kind, as great a shock to all antecedent experience as any sensible phenomenon which it is possible to imagine? I answered that question broadly in my former article, and I now repeat the answer. People believe in these astonishing results not upon specific testimony to specific facts, but because they form part of the regular constituted system of life, and because they know that explanations of them are offered to the examination of every one who is able and willing to take the trouble of understanding them. Take for instance the electric telegraph. Why do you or I believe that it is possible to transmit messages across thousands of miles in a moment of time? Certainly not because a number of isolated witnesses testify to particular instances in which such messages were as a fact transmitted; certainly not because we, or, at least, I, could give a detailed explanation of the means employed; but because we read telegraphic news every day in the papers, because we see telegraph offices in all the towns and at every railroad station; because we hear of companies formed for the purpose, and see posts and wires said to be their property running over the country in all directions, and also because we have a general notion of the way in which the thing is done. I fully accept the consequence that, until all this evidence, or a considerable part of it, has collected, ordinary people ought not on my principles to have believed specific assertions by credible witnesses as to the instantaneous transmission of news. Suppose for instance, apart from all explanation whatever, credible witnesses had asserted that they went into a room in London, and that a

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man sitting there told them that a number of facts were then happening at Constantinople, of the occurrence of which satisfactory evidence afterwards arrived in the due course of post, I should not have believed their statement, just as, at present, I do not believe the statements about Mr. Home flying round the room. As soon as the matter was explained I should immediately believe. I should have acted consistently in this, for I disclaim the notion that either my belief or the belief of any man whatever always squares with the truth, or that there is any means by which it can possibly be made to do so. Form your opinions on what principles you please, and they will always be partly false. The most that you can do is to act upon rules which will fail as seldom, and succeed as often as possible. Now I maintain that the rule that you ought to believe what is asserted by credible eye-witnesses ought to be limited by this condition—so long as that which they assert is conformable to the existing state of the knowledge of the person to whom they address themselves. You deny this, appealing to the case of scientific results, to which I reply, true it is that my rule would sometimes prevent some people from believing new truths, but it would more frequently prevent them from believing falsehoods, and it would moreover delay rather than prevent their belief of new truths, and this delay, so far from being an evil, is, in itself, an advantage; therefore my rule is more advantageous than yours.

That my theory would only delay and not prevent the reception of new truth is obvious on a moment's consideration. To return to the case of the electric telegraph, I disbelieve the man who first tells me of the bare results. I disbelieve an accumulation of testimony, all directed to prove that bare result; but when the matter is taken up at the other end I do not disbelieve. I am told on good authority that there is an invisible and imponderable agent in nature which is called electricity, and this is illustrated by a number of sufficiently familiar facts and experiments. By degrees I am taught to see that currents of electricity may by appropriate means be transmitted instantaneously to remote places, and so, step by step, I am led up to the electric telegraph, and when the matter is so put before me, I believe it as firmly as any one—nay, more firmly and in a more intelligent way than a person who believed in the bare wonder when it was first put before him as a mere naked result asserted to be true by alleged eye-witnesses.

That the theory prevents the reception of one kind of falsehoods, and that not an uncommon or unimportant kind, is self-evident. Therefore the only objection to which it is open is that it delays the reception of a certain number of new truths: but what is this objection worth? Very little; for the new truths so reported must by the hypothesis be mere bare results: as soon as the alleged facts are brought into harmony with others, and have their proper places assigned to them in some general theory which reconciles and explains a great number of familiar facts, the case is altered, and the difficulty of believing removed. What harm was there, then, in

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not believing the true statements of the eye-witnesses in the meantime? Of course in ordinary cases it is insulting to a man to disbelieve his statements, because most of his statements refer to subjects on which detached human testimony is the appropriate proof. When the question is, What was said or done on such an occasion? was a particular man at such a place at such a time? were there twenty sacks of flour in such a boat, or only fifteen?—human testimony is in its proper place; but when a man begins to talk of matters beyond ordinary experience, he gets to talk of what his hearers, or most of them, do not understand, and he ought to be as little affronted by their refusing to believe him as by their refusing to believe him if he talked a foreign language of which they were ignorant. Hence the disbelief of the new truths neither affronts the witness nor injures the hearer. Then what is the harm of it?

You raise a specific objection to one of my remarks, or rather to one of my illustrations, which I may as well deal with here. I had said, that if a murder were said to have been committed in the room, in which and at the time when Mr. Home was said to have floated in the air, and if the witnesses brought to prove the crime all testified to the miracle, I should be sorry to convict upon their evidence. Upon this you say the criminal "would be very lucky if he had the writer on the jury, for any other jury would be unanimous against him. And rightly so, as it appears to us. For why should not the jury say that they have nothing to do with the fact of Mr. Home's floating? It might have been conjuring. It might have been an ocular delusion. It might have been true, and referable to some physical force not yet analyzed, or it might have been a miracle; but at any rate, it had nothing to do with the murder, and that must be judged of by the usual rules of evidence. It seems to us, that it would clearly be the duty of the judge in summing up to keep the two inquiries wholly distinct, and to direct the jury only to think of the murder."

Murder is, no doubt, a bad illustration, because there are generally collateral facts connected with that crime, which corroborate the testimony. The true illustration would be some transitory offence—the uttering, for instance, of treasonable words, which leaves no trace behind it, except in the memory of the witnesses; and making that change in the illustration, I still adhere to it. Several respectable men say that they heard a man say such and such things. They also say, that at the same time and place something miraculous occurred. Here, everything rests on the credit of the witnesses, and they unite in making an incredible statement as to a collateral fact. You say that makes no difference, because the two inquiries are distinct. This is a very simple way of getting out of the difficulty; but it is much more simple than satisfactory. You say the judge ought to tell the jury that the two inquiries should be kept distinct, because the miracle said to have occurred had no connection with the crime said to have been committed. If all collateral inquiries, tending to test the credibility of witnesses, were excluded from courts of justice, their proceedings would be more simplified than improved.

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Suppose all the witnesses, who agreed as to the words spoken, differed as to the details of the transaction, would you say that that fact had no connection with their credibility, and that the judge ought to tell the jury to dismiss the collateral contradictions from their minds, because they were not directly connected with the question at issue? Surely it would be very wrong to do so; but why? Because, if two people give different accounts of the same fact, it is impossible that both should be right; therefore, one or both are wrong; therefore, you cannot act upon their bare assertion, to the prejudice of a third person; but how does this differ from the case of a common assertion by both of an impossibility? Is it more impossible that witnesses for an *alibi*, who contradict each other, should both be right, than that a man without visible cause should float about the room? The contradiction, it is admitted, would shake the credit of the witnesses: why should not the assertion? In what sense is it impossible that a contradiction should be true in which it is not impossible that Mr. Home's miracles should be true?

There is a case in which the very circumstance that I am supposing actually did occur. In 1796, one Crossfield was tried for high treason. He was said to have devised a plan for firing poisoned darts at George III., and one of the witnesses against him was a man named Winter, who said that while they were in a French prison-ship together, Crossfield had frequently confessed the whole story. Winter was asked in cross-examination whether he had not been in the habit of telling an odd story about a hare. He said that being between Axminster and Lyme, he stopped by a wall. "A hare came through my arm; I catched him by the leg and turned him round. It was about twelve o'clock at night; I threw him in over the gate, in among a parcel of dogs, and he remained there that night; and the next day, just as the parson was going to church, the hare got out and the dogs followed it through Lyme; there they catched the hare and it was carried up." He was then pressed as to what he thought of the hare, which passed its time safely amongst the dogs, as the counsel said, "like Daniel in the den of lions." He would not own that he thought the matter supernatural, but said, in answer to Lord Chief Justice Eyre, "They say the place is troubled; now I took it to be an old hare." A witness for the prisoner said that Winter told "a number of foolish stories . . . one was of his catching the devil in the shape of a hare, and such ridiculous nonsense." And the Chief Justice, in summing up, said, "The story was certainly a foolish one, though not absolutely impossible to be true; but he added to it that there was a notion that the place was troubled, which leads to a suspicion that he himself conceived there was something supernatural in the event which he related. This would be a strong mark of a distempered imagination . . . The whole taken together marks so strongly that this man's mind is not perfectly composed, that it must weigh against the credit of his testimony, even though there should be no reason to doubt but that he means to speak the truth. This man has given very material evidence against the

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prisoner, but it can hardly be thought, having this cloud thrown over it, a sufficient foundation for a verdict in this important cause between the king and the prisoner at the bar." * What would the judge—and he was an eminent man in his day—have thought of the evidence of men who soberly declared they had seen ottomans climb on to sofas, tables skip and dance, and human bodies float in mid-air, without any visible cause? He would hardly have agreed with you in thinking the fact that such assertions were made utterly irrelevant to the credit of the persons who made them.

Upon the whole, my objections to your argument may be summed up as follows:—You either assert that human testimony has some cogency of its own, independent of the experienced improbability that it should be untrue, and this is obviously absurd; or else you say that experience shows that the truth of any statement, however strange, is less improbable than that a large number of credible witnesses should say what is not true: and for this experience neither does nor can bear you out. In the first case you are reduced to an absurdity; in the second, to a *petitio principii.*

My own principle is, that it cannot be asserted that the same evidence ought to lead all those who hear and understand it to draw from it the same inferences, but that those inferences ought to vary according to the different degrees of knowledge which the hearers possess, the circumstances in which they are placed, and the use to which they propose to apply their conclusions. This principle appears to me to be of the highest practical importance, and it is also liable to be misunderstood by those who will not take the pains to consider it with candour and attention. I will therefore try to explain it a little more fully. No doubt truth itself is one and unchangeable. One proposition only, and no more, represents the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth upon every subject to which the human mind can be directed, and it is equally certain that if an inquirer into any given subject could ascertain what that proposition was, he could not do better than believe it. An omniscient mind, embracing in one view all the relations of all the phenomena in the universe, would no doubt believe the exact truth upon all subjects relating to or arising out of them. With human beings placed as we are, under an infinite number of restrictions, the attempt to rise at any given time to more than extremely limited and partial views of things is simply idle. We are born into the world with a vast number of passions and appetites, and long before we are masters of our own faculties we are made aware of the existence of a vast flood of facts all about us, with which we have to deal as well as we can, with a view to objects dimly perceived at first, and probably never understood in a manner perfectly distinct and complete. Such, however, is our nature that we cannot effect any object whatever, or deal with any state of circumstances at all, unless we have some sort of knowledge, some sort of general belief. As far as we can guess, this necessity for acting on principles intellectually apprehended is the special peculiarity of the human race, the great mark by which our actions are

* 26 St. Tr. pp. 75. 202-3.

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distinguished from those of brutes. Hence the aggregate of our beliefs for the time being is the most important part of our equipment for the business of life, a more important part if the matter is fairly considered than all the rest put together; for the belief which you or I entertain at any given moment with reference to any given subject-matter determines our conduct with respect to it, and the aggregate of our beliefs determines the aggregate of our conduct. Hence the formation of beliefs or opinions—for the two mean the same thing—is probably the most important business of human life, inasmuch as it gives the colour to every part of it. As we go along in the world every one of us forms for himself a set of opinions, principally, and in most cases, by habit or by the association of ideas; to a small extent, and in a few cases, by independent thought and inquiry; but in one way or another every man, woman, and child in so far as it is a rational creature and not a mere animal, has a set of opinions by which his or her conduct is regulated. The child thinks its parents are ultimate authorities, the woman may think the same of her husband, and the man of his newspaper; but be the opinions what they may, they are the rudders by which every one steers his course. Resign your whole soul, if you please, to the direction of a guide whom you choose to consider infallible and supreme. It is still your opinion of his infallibility and supremacy by which you are guided. Daily and hourly experience shows us that the happiness, the success, in a word the whole value of our lives, depends on the proportion of truth which our stock of opinions contains, and that opinions are valuable only in so far as they correspond with the subject-matter to which they apply. Hence the admission of a new opinion into our stock in hand is a matter of great practical importance, and it ought not to be done without due and careful consideration.

This fact is perfectly consistent with another fact, which exists alongside of it—namely, the miserable insufficiency of the grounds on which most people are compelled to form their opinions by the nature of the case, and the circumstances under which they are placed. For instance, most people in this country have political opinions. It is much to be doubted whether there are fifty, or even ten living men, who have fully considered all that is known on any one political subject; it is certain that the total amount of existing knowledge on any important political subject bears a small proportion to the amount of matter relevant to the subject, which, by sufficient inquiry, might be known, and it is also certain that the few persons who have exhausted any one subject are prejudiced, crotchety, and one-sided. In fact, human knowledge can never get much beyond conjecture. There is, even in the exact sciences, or at least in the application of them, a certain degree of guess-work. What we call the law of gravitation may be only a branch of some wider formula, which, in due time, will falsify all our calculations, and we neglect this possibility whenever we apply it. In the common affairs of life, in politics, in medicine, in moral inquiries, in everything in short that relates to human interests, the conjectural element is far larger. Certain things are sug-

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gested to us by evidence. We think them likely, we retain them in our minds till we get accustomed to them, and look upon them as true; and that is all that we really mean when we speak of believing them.

This sceptical view (if you like to call it so) of our beliefs upon all subjects does not in the least interfere with their practical importance. We are very likely to be wrong when we have taken every possible means in our power to be right. Nobody can ever be secure against mistakes upon any subject, but still it is of great importance that he should try his utmost to be right, for experience shows that notwithstanding all that can be said in depreciation of our means of knowledge, the difference between a man who does his best to be right and one who does not care whether he is right or wrong, is of infinite practical importance in every position of life. "Wisdom exceedeth folly as light exceedeth darkness." Our opinions are very poor things, but we are very poor creatures. They go a very little way, but they make that little difference which lies between our little successes and little failures.

If this is a true account of the nature and importance of belief, it follows that the question whether or not a particular proposition is true or false, ought always to be asked with reference to the peculiar circumstances of the person who is expected to answer the question; the thing in itself no doubt is either true or false simply, the words in which the proposition is clothed either do or do not correspond with the facts to which they are meant to apply; but if a thousand different people have occasion to form an opinion on the question, it appears to me that they will probably find it necessary to form a thousand different opinions, varying according to the reasons which they have for forming an opinion, the evidence submitted to them, their time, opportunity, and natural talents for examining it, and a thousand other matters. In the particular case which I have been discussing, a man who views the whole question of spirits and spirit-rapping merely as a sort of toy on which to display his intellectual skill, might naturally take one view, a scientific inquirer would take another, a court of law might view it in a dozen different lights, according to the precise shape in which the matter was presented to them; a patient who hoped for relief from a disease, a disciple to whom the system was presented as the proof of a new religion, a private person to whom some specific advice was tendered, or some particular advantage proposed, might each call for a different amount of evidence before forming his opinion, and might each draw from the very same evidence a different conclusion. Surely the inference from this is, that the formation of an opinion is a practical matter; and that the weight of evidence, its effect on the mind to which it is addressed, varies according to the person who has to receive it, and the occasion on which it is given.

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

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Out of the World.

PART II.

Dr. Rich and Miss Berners were married at Putney Church early one wintry morning. Mr. and Mrs. Dumbleton went to the wedding, and Roberta, in a pretty white bonnet. There was scarcely any one else. After it was all over, Roberta walked home, packed up her things, and went back by the train to the country village where her step-father was vicar, and where her mother, who was not James's mother, but his late father's wife, was busy from morning to night with little boys and girls at home and abroad; with soup-kitchens, training-schools; with a very tiresome, fidgety second husband, who could do nothing himself, but was very particular about everybody else's doings. He loved his own children, but was not over fond of his step-daughter; and I think that is why Mrs. Baron was glad that Berta, her dearest and favourite child, should be almost constantly away. But, all the same, it was a delight to have her at home, and she came to the garden gate to clasp her in her kind motherly arms, while all the step-brothers and sisters streamed out in a little procession to welcome her. It was Christmas holiday time—the boys were at home. Ricarda (Mrs. Baron had a fancy for inventing names) was grown up quite a young woman; Tina had broken her front tooth; Lucy was naughty, but she should come down from her room after tea; Will, and Nick, and Harry, were hovering about, long-legged, and kindly, and glad. It seemed impossible to Berta that she was only an hour or two away from the struggle of love and jealousy, of tenderness and anxiety, she had been going through for the last few weeks—only two hours distant from the last tears she had dropped, as with Betty's assistance she packed up her boxes and came away: only an hour away from James's last kind words and thoughtful care. And so she settled down quietly in this other home.

She cut out frocks for the children, set to work at the choir, and for three whole days she and her sisters were busy dressing up the old church with ivy, and holly, and red berries.

Months went by. She heard from James; she had one or two letters from Horatia, in the beautiful handwriting. They were back long ago, and settled down quite comfortably, Darby and Joan-wise. They hoped she would come soon, and stay as long as ever she liked one day. James added, "Caton says he would like to come down and pay you a visit. I daresay you may see him before long." Poor Mrs. Baron was very much excited, but also rather alarmed by this piece of intelligence. She did not know how her husband might take this attention of the

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THE DOCTOR'S SECRET HALF SURPRISED

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young doctor's. I think, as a rule, women are more hospitable than men, and more glad to see their friends at more hours of the day, but I must confess that it was not only hospitality which made her so anxious on this occasion to play hostess. Dr. Caton was ten years younger than James, was very well to do, and certainly was not coming all this way to see her and the ungracious vicar only. She was right. When Dr. Caton arrived, he asked for Berta eagerly, and Berta appeared. But so unwilling, so little glad to see him, so silent, so anxious to get out of his way, that he determined to go back again without saying anything of what he had meant to say, and had come all this long way to tell her.

"How is James getting on?" Mrs. Baron asked, by way of making some sort of talk.

Dr. Caton shrugged his broad shoulders. "I hardly ever go there now. Mrs. Rich gives herself no end of airs, but I cannot drop him altogether; he looks ill enough, poor fellow, and I think he begins already to repent of his bargain."

"These unsuitable marriages rarely answer," said Mrs. Baron, with a sigh.

"That is just what he was so angry with me for saying," said the young man. "*I* like a woman who is not above her station, who minds her house, and takes care of her husband, and that is what Mrs. R. *doesn't do.* Why, it was as different in Miss Berta's time. . . . Now, the house is all topsy-turvy. She's got a lady's-maid, they tell me, but the dinner is disgraceful. I assure you, I am not particular—you know I'm not, Miss Berta—but I couldn't eat what was on my plate. I give you my honour I couldn't."

Berta hoped that this might be a prejudiced report, but she could not help feeling sad and anxious as the time came near for her to go back to them again.

Alas! the prejudiced report happened to be the true one.

If Horatia had married younger it might have been different, but it is almost impossible suddenly, in middle life, to become a new woman altogether; and from being lazy, nervous, languid, and unhandy, suddenly to grow brisk, orderly, thoughtful, and hard-working.

Berta paid them one very short visit, during which all went smoothly, and yet she went home for another six months, very doubtful as to how things might turn. Her brother was not repenting, as Dr. Caton had told them, but it seemed to her that Horatia might begin to get tired of this new life, as she had wearied of the old one.

When James and Horatia married, they both pictured to themselves the lives they were going to lead; and the two pictures were not in the least like one another, or like the reality even. James's picture was of Horatia, a happy woman, a good wife, beautiful, sympathetic, interested in his schemes, contented with her destiny, cheerful, and devoted. He saw her busy in a thousand ways, working among the poor with more

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energy than Roberta had ever shown, understanding his plans far better, better able to advise, helping him, encouraging him in all good, the best friend, the most faithful companion. "These instincts are unfailing," he said to himself; "I know her as well as I know myself; by what strange, happy intuition is one led to these discoveries?"

Horatia's picture was also of herself. Elegantly but simply dressed, gracefully entertaining her relations, leading a sort of Petit Trianon existence. Giving delicious but inexpensive little dinners, with croquet on the lawn, perhaps; afterwards returning among her old companions; gracious, unpresuming, independent, much made of, she was, especially at first, well satisfied with herself and what she had done, and with her husband. He might be a little rough and abrupt, but that she should be able to change; and, with her connections, it would be indeed strange if he did not get on, and become—who knows?—a prosperous man in time. But by degrees she began to think the calm haven was perhaps a little too calm after all—only broken, as it were, by the vagaries of Betty and the cook—Horatia lost all patience with them. She detested a racket, but she was not accustomed to this utter seclusion, or, what was even worse, this strange company:—young ladies who called her dear, and who were surprised at everything; homely matrons, with funny husbands; and that intolerable young man, Mr. Caton, who was worst of all. Fortunately she had still her own relations to go to.

And meanwhile James went on prosing to himself. Long happy evenings, Horatia playing on the piano while he sat and smoked (as he was doing now) on the lawn. The whole house brightened by her coming—a stir of life, pleasant talk, where there had only been silence before, or poor Roberta's gentle commonplaces. Dear Berta! It would be as happy a change for her as for himself. He could hardly believe that all this treasure of happiness was his, that he had a wife in the drawing-room, and that wife Horatia; and he put down his cigar, and went and looked in at the window to assure himself that it was not all a fancy brought about by the smoke, the faint perfume of roses, the sweet bewildering air of a summer's day. And in a minute he came back, and began to puff tobacco, not castles in the air any more. For Horatia was there certainly, but so was Lady Whiston; so was Mrs. Dumbleton. Voices, flounces, big carriage at the garden gate. It was no fancy; and as he did not want to face them all, he came back to his place.

"James!" Horatia calls, opening the window and looking out.

James looks round and shakes his head.

Horatia, surprised, comes out across the grass. "Won't you come and see aunt Car?"

"I am busy," says the doctor.

"They want us to dine there," says Horatia, putting her hand on his shoulder. "They expect Lord Holloway."

"We dined there yesterday—there is that breakfast next week; make some excuse."

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"But in your profession it is of great consequence that you should improve your acquaintance," says Horatia, blushing up. "They were just saying so. Lord Holloway has dreadful attacks of the gout."

"That is what I shall have if I dine there any more. You can go, you know. You can make up to Lord Holloway all the better if I am not there."

"How can you say such disagreeable things? Of course I must go without you, if you will not come. It will look very odd; I don't like it at all."

"Then why don't you stay?" says the doctor in his kind voice, smiling as she frowns.

"Aunt Car will be hurt as it is," says Horatia, looking round. "I suppose I had better go back and tell her. It is most unpleasant."

James glanced a quick, doubtful look as she walked away unconscious, slim, tall, graceful, with her violet dress trailing over the grass and the daisies. She stoops her head at the window, and passes in under the clustering roses. After all why should not she like to go, James asks himself, and though he might have answered the question, perhaps he took care not to do so. How many such questions are there which are best unasked and unanswered? Truth, indeed, is greater than silence, and if we could always tell what was true, it would be well to speak always. But silence is often better than the half-truths we utter; silence to ourselves and of ourselves, as well as to others.

Horatia came home about one o'clock in the morning, and found her husband still up, sitting in the little study, and Mr. Caton with him. The window was open, a candle was flaring on the table, and she thought there was a strange aromatic smell in the room. But it was hard to find Mr. Caton always there, even at that hour of the night. She was not safe, and she looked her displeasure. He got up with such a grave face as he made her a little stiff bow, that she was still more indignant. James too was grave, though he smiled and put out his hand.

Horatia wrapped her white cloak round her, and turned her back upon Caton.

"What have you been concocting, James? why do you sit with the window open? I wish you had been with me. Lord Holloway is perfectly charming, and——"

"Well, good night," said Caton suddenly. "Good evening, Mrs. Rich," and he walked off. As the door shut Horatia began indignantly, "That man is insup——" but her husband stopped her languidly, and said he was not up to fighting his friend's battles that night. He was tired. "Is this the way he speaks to me?" Horatia thought.

The next day the doctor went up to town and came back to dinner very silent, and much out of spirits. And Mr. Caton, as usual, looked in in the evening, and they were closeted together for some time. Horatia had taken a nervous dislike to the poor young man; his pre-

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sence was almost unendurable to her. Rich looked hurt and vexed when she said so one day.

"Why have you taken this aversion to my old companion?" he asked.

"Because he is familiar and interfering," cries Horatia.

"What do you say to Lady Whiston, then?" says the doctor, provoked.

Horatia was still more provoked, and the little discussion ended in her going off alone, as usual, to the Dumbleton fête.

But she looked so bright and so handsome in her white dress, as she wished him good-by, that James secretly relented, and thought he should like to see her admired, and determined, if he could, to come for her after all.

Horatia was not sorry to go by herself. She felt more at her ease when her husband was not there. Old friends came up to greet her. Two old flames asked her to dance. Mr. Dumbleton gave her his arm, and took her into the conservatory for an ice. Here they all were, making much of her, welcoming her. Horatia could not help contrasting all this with her husband's grave looks and unconcerned manner.

"How does the housekeeping go on?" said Mr. Dumbleton.

"Don't talk about it," cried Horatia. "Everything is so different. My genius does not lie in that direction; and yet—would you believe it? James grumbles at times." What a pretty effect.

They were in a long conservatory, full of trees and shrubs, and flowers and Chinese lanterns. The sound of distant music, the perfume of the plants, the soft glimmer of the lights, filled the whole place, and the stars came twinkling through the glass domes. Horatia was enchanted instead of being bored as in old times. It was an Arabian Night's Entertainment. One of her cousins, who had been an old admirer of hers, came up and scarcely recognized her, she looked so wonderfully handsome and happy; he asked her to dance, and Horatia consented, and went off laughing and radiant, but Henry Dumbleton looked after her a little doubtful as to the entire success of his match-making.

Horatia, meanwhile, twirled and twisted, the musicians played one of those charming waltzes that seem to be singing and sighing with one breath. The music surged and sank again; it was like the sea flowing upon a shore; breathless, excited, Horatia danced on in cadence to the tune, and thought this moment ought to last for ever; she and her partner went to one of the windows to refresh themselves, and stood out upon a low balcony, close to the ground, and began to talk of old days, as people do when they suddenly grow confidential with time and place, and then they talked down to later days, and the cousin, whose name was Charles Whiston, reproached her for having left them as she had done: "Did she never regret it? Had she quite given up old friends for new?"

"No, no, no!" cried Horatia; "unequal marriages are foolish things,

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Charles. It is not until you find yourself lonely and misunderstood in the midst of people who have been brought up to see things *en-dessous*, instead of *en-dessus*, that you begin to discover how real and how insurmountable certain differences are. Things with which I have been familiar all my life seem strange and unfamiliar to them. There is a sort of suspicious defiance I cannot describe—a sort of meanness, of familiarity, of low jocularity."

"But how could you ever marry him?" cried Charles Whiston, much concerned. "This is terrible. You must come away; you must come to us, we are always——"

Some one who had been sitting under the window started at that moment, and got up and walked away.

"I am not speaking of my husband," said Horatia, blushing, and starting, and a little ashamed of herself. "I was thinking of—of friends—persons who come to the house whom I cannot be rid of. There is his step-mother, for instance—who came a short time ago, and interfered in the most unwarrantable manner. There is a certain dreadful Dr. Caton whom James is for ever asking. Can you fancy that man daring to call me Mrs. Gallipots?—don't laugh—such vulgar insults are no laughing matter."

"Poor Horatia," said her companion, sentimentally. "I assure you I do not feel inclined to laugh."

The musicians began to play a new measure, and the dancers set off with fresh spirit. The people outside were still pacing and talking in low voices, the trees were hung with brilliant jewels of fire, no breath stirred the branches, the white dresses gleamed mysteriously through the darkness, the light steps loitered, the low voices sank. Horatia stood immovable, with her head against her hand: her companion was sitting on the low stone parapet, and leaning lazily over the side of the balcony, when suddenly he started up, and stood listening.

"Did you hear that?" he said. And once more distinctly sounding through the still night came a plaintive cry out of the wood.

"Oh! go and see," said Horatia; "what can it be?"

In a moment all the silent enchantment of the hour seemed broken and dispelled. That forlorn cry had shaken and dispersed the dreams, the illusions, the harmonies of the summer's night. It was like a pebble falling into still waters. But it was only for a moment: by degrees the silence, the music, the starlight, reassured the startled people; they forgot once more that pain existed in the world, that trouble could approach them. Horatia had almost forgotten her alarm when her cousin rejoined her.

"It was nothing," he said. "Some one fainted—a woman was frightened, and screamed. Dr. Rich was there, and another doctor."

"My husband!" said Horatia, surprised.

"Some one told me they had gone home with the patient," said Charles Whiston. "Shall we have another waltz?" Tum—tum-te-tum, te-tum—the music plays, and off they go.

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When Horatia got home she found a little note hurriedly scrawled. "Don't expect me to-night, I am detained.—Yours, J. R."

He came home next day, looking pale and exhausted as if he had been up all night.

"Who was ill?" Horatia asked. "Who fainted?"

"I cannot tell you who it was," said the doctor. "Caton attended him. I have been very busy, and I am not well myself, Horatia. I shall go and lie down."

"You went up to the hall last night, then?" persisted Horatia.

James did not answer, but looked at her once in an odd sort of way, and then went out of the room. Horatia never quite knew what had happened that night.

It seemed to Horatia that he was never quite the same again after this unlucky fête. She actually began to wish for Berta to come.

Roberta's mother had brought her that first time, and left her and gone away, after managing to give great offence to James, as well as to his wife, by one or two awkward speeches. And when Berta came back to the old trouble once more—the old battle and disappointment—she determined to be warned by her mother's example. She would gladly have stayed on at home, but James kept writing for her to come, and the bugbear of a stepfather growled out, "Why didn't she go, since they were so anxious to have her?" and besides, there was a natural yearning after James in her heart, which would have brought her from the end of the world, if he wished it.

But now that Horatia was mistress of his house, Berta did not like to interfere in the household disarrangements—for it was nothing else: Horatia evidently discontented and unsatisfied—James looking worn and out of spirits—the dinner unsatisfactory, the furniture dim and neglected, maids careless and unpunctual. Horatia had theories about everything, but did not possess the gift of putting them in practice. Every human being had its rights, she used to say, and those of servants were constantly infringed. The consequence was, that though Betty had time to read the paper and a course of history judiciously selected by her mistress, she had not time to dust and scrub and scour, as in days of yore, when the poor doctor's rights only were considered.

Roberta found that it was almost more than she could do, not to speak, not to interfere. She was ready to cry sometimes when her brother came in, tired and exhausted, and had to wait an hour for his dinner. She thought him looking ill, indeed, and changed. By degrees she almost got to hate Horatia, and did not do her justice for those good qualities she certainly possessed. Horatia's temper was perfect; she bore Berta's irrepressible glances and loud reproaches admirably. She saw that her husband loved his sister; she would not pain him by blaming her. She often wondered that he should seem more at home with Roberta than with herself. She thought herself infinitely superior, cleverer, handsomer, better bred; but she had not Berta's rare gift of home-making, her sweet

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repose of manner, her unselfish devotion to those for whom she cared. Horatia rarely forgot herself. Berta was like her brother, and almost lived in the people she loved.

And so Horatia's beautiful black eyes did not see all the many things that were amiss; her soft white hands did not work and prepare for her husband's comfort; days went by; little estrangements went by; the geese cackled on the common; sick people died or got well; well people fell sick; James Rich went his rounds, and sighed sometimes as he looked at his beautiful wife. It had not answered, somehow.

Every day little stories are told: sometimes about great things, sometimes about nothing at all. This one was about nothing at all, and yet the story was there to read, and I am trying to write it down.

The people who tell the stories are generally too interested and unhappy, or happy, or anxious, or vexed, to look at their daily lives from another person's point of view; and sometimes even other people standing by have not the gift of seeing what is passing before their eyes. Horatia, who was quick about other people, was blind to her own faults. Dr. Rich was the person in that household who could best read the disappointing little history that was telling out, day by day, under his roof, and the struggle of his daily life was to be blind, and not to read the open page. Horatia had no such scruples, and always said what she thought, and thought what she liked, and spoke openly to James, to the Dumbletons, of her fancies, disappointments, dislikes, particularly of her dislike to Dr. Caton. Now that Berta was there, he was always coming, and Horatia did not at all fancy such a brother-in-law; and so she told the girl, who laughed, and blushed, and acquiesced. Horatia said as much to James one day, who answered, somewhat absently, "Caton is a very clever, good fellow. I am afraid Roberta will have nothing to say to him; but he comes to see me, Horatia." And that evening, after dinner, coming out into the garden, she saw, much to her disgust, Dr. Caton's red whiskers and a cloud of tobacco under the arbour, where her husband was also sitting, apparently deep in conversation with his friend.

Another grievance she had, which was this: she inherited a few hundred pounds unexpectedly about this time, which she wanted to lay out in doing up the house and the garden, and in more Persian mats, and a brougham. Dr. Rich insisted on her leaving the whole sum untouched at his banker's. "You shall have it in due time," he said. "Horatia, can't you believe that I have some good reason for not spending money just now?" She could not understand this strange fancy for saving. He would go nowhere; he would insist on economizing in every way; he would not willingly ask even her cousins to dinner. Wearied, disappointed, provoked, she began to tell herself that her marriage had been a mistake—she began to long to get away, to sigh for and to dream of liberty. They did not know how far these dreams had carried her, once she had given way to them. She had wished for Berta, but when Berta

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came she grew jealous of her. Life was a miserable delusion, Horatia often thought.

Berta could not help seeing there was something wrong, and put it all to poor Horatia's score. It seemed to her that Dr. Caton knew more than he chose to tell; for sometimes she would catch a half-pitying, hesitating glance; and once when she met him on the common, she saw that he seemed almost inclined to speak, but she walked on rapidly, and then he changed his mind and turned away abruptly. She did not dare to ask what it was, for she thought that after all it might only be the old story that she did not want to hear.

She was sitting one day sewing in the window, Horatia was lying on the sofa, the sun was pouring in. It looked a peaceful little scene enough —flowers and young women, novels, needlework, silence, sunlight—when presently Horatia put down her novel, and began to talk; and as she talked, Berta began to sew very fiercely, and to blush up angrily.

"It is a shame," Horatia was saying, "that I may not choose my own company; that I am to be forced to receive a person so distasteful to me as Dr. Caton. His familiarity is really unbearable. To-day he came up to me, and told me that I ought to take more care of James. You and your brother cannot understand how distasteful this sort of thing is—what a real want this want of congenial society is to me."

"You have James," said Berta.

"James is a dear, good James," said Horatia, passing her hand wearily over her eyes; "but he has not been brought up to many things that I have been accustomed to. I feel a little want of sympathy, a little lonely sometimes."

A cleverer person then Roberta might have understood her better; but the girl was thoroughly provoked and offended. All her pent-up passion burst out; and she spoke, scarcely knowing what she said.

"Do you dare to complain—you who have made James sad and lonely by coming to live with him—you who don't appreciate him, who can't understand his goodness? He is the best, wisest, and dearest of men; his gentleness and forbearance are wonderful. You neglect him as no wife ever neglected her husband. You do nothing to help him. When he is worn out you complain to him about yourself—you are so used to think of yourself, Horatia. I must speak. I may never come into your house again; but it breaks my heart to see it all. And when he comes home sad and out of spirits, you don't look up—you scarcely heed him: you say, 'James, shut the door, or poke the fire,' or whatever it may be. I always used to think James's wife would be the happiest, proudest woman in the whole world, until you came to undeceive me."

Even Horatia could not bear this: she, too, got angry.

"You certainly shall never come here again, Roberta, unless I am away. You speak of things which are not your concern; and you should have been silent. I am quite able to appreciate my husband without anybody to point out his merits. But sometimes I think, Roberta, that

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either you or I had better go. Stay," she said; "I am not at all certain that it is I who should remain;" and she gathered up her papers and books, and drew herself up to her full height, and sailed out of the room.

And so poor James, coming home earlier than usual, found only Roberta crying and sobbing in the drawing-room. Horatia was upstairs with a nervous attack. A strong smell of burning and a black smoke came in whiffs out of the kitchen. The maids were in her room sympathizing with the mistress; and the dinner was spoiling unheeded. The penitent Roberta tried in vain to stop crying.

"I am going away," she said; "going away this very evening. It is too disagreeable for Horatia to have me in the house. I have behaved so dreadfully. I only wonder she did not turn me out on the common. I am very sorry, dear James. I will do anything: I will beg her pardon, if she will be only kind enough to forgive what has passed, and let me come and see you again. Because I do love you almost more than anybody in the world. Please don't hate me for behaving so badly."

Then he had to go upstairs to Horatia. When he came down he was looking very pale and biting his lips. His wife had gasped out things about "your relations;" about the way in which he preferred them and their ways to hers; about his being more happy before she came; about her loneliness; about —— But there is no use in recapitulating all her nervous griefs. "You had better pack up, Roberta," said the doctor, with one more sigh. "I will drive you down to the station. I must see you off. It is only four o'clock now; if we catch the five o'clock train it will still be light by the time you get home. I think your sister will get over it sooner if you are not here. Don't cry, dear; it will be all right in a little. I can quite understand her annoyance. Don't cry any more, Berta; that won't mend matters," he said, cheerfully. Then he went into his study, and shut the door, and fell down into his big chair, and let his head fall heavily on his breast. His pulses were throbbing with grief; it was all he could do to subdue his agitation. His wife's passionate indignation and reproaches had upset him; and that Berta, whom he looked upon almost as a daughter, should be estranged, and that he should be left quite alone—more lonely than he had ever been—was a cruel stab to this tender and sensitive heart. When it was time for Berta to go, he came out of his room, looking exactly as usual. He went to his wife's bedside and said good-by, but she would not answer him; and then he came down again, and helped his sister into the little carriage, and took his place leisurely beside her, and they drove away.

The trees seemed to fly past them, the birds went wheeling over the fields, a blue-grey mist hung over the distant hedgerows and the haystacks, over the farmsteads and cottages nestling in the little hollows.

The landscape was painted in black and grey, with clouds and rainwater. Now and then a rain-laden wind would come blowing freshly into Roberta's face.

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As they were nearing the station, somebody came up alongside upon a tired horse. It was Dr. Caton.

"I was going to look for you," said Dr. Rich, pulling up. "Well, you come in this evening, about nine o'clock. We can't wait now, we shall miss the train." And then he bent forward and said a few words, in a low voice. Berta wondered what it was all about, as she nodded and smiled good-by. Dr. Caton looked up with a strange expression. She wondered whether it was because she was going away; and then she wondered whether she should ever forgive herself, and thought what a comfort it would be to tell her mother everything, and to be well scolded as she deserved, and then kissed and forgiven like a child. She gave such a tremendous sigh once, that her brother began to laugh. "You silly child!" he said; "forget all about it. I will undertake that Horatia shall bear no malice." Then he drove on silently for a minute, and then he said, "Berta, do you think you could ever fancy Caton?—he is a little rough, but he is a thorough good fellow, and very fond of you."

"I am very fond of him," said Berta, smiling, "but I don't want to marry him. Perhaps, if you praise him very much, James, in time—— Ah, here we are!" And presently Berta had kissed him, and said good-by, and watched him until the train had carried her away, and he disappeared. By leaning out she just saw him for one instant more, looking after her with his kind, smiling face; and then the train went suddenly on through the quiet country, carrying away Roberta, with her troubles and puzzles. The doctor travels homeward, strangely abstracted; and Horatia has risen from her bed, where she had been lying, and is making desperate and angry resolutions.

"Was he indeed more happy before I came? He did not deny it. When I gave up everything for him, I thought, at least, that he would love me." She smoothed her tumbled hair, put on a shawl, and went downstairs and out into the open air. "It will do me good," she thought, as she opened the garden-door, and walked along the gravel-walk towards the arbour. A book was lying on the seat; James or Roberta must have left it. He sometimes smoked under the honeysuckles after dinner. Roberta used to take her work there of a morning. Horatia hated the place, and never went in. The faded summer green looked almost fresh again in the grey, damp atmosphere; the birds flew over her head; and across the common the dahlias were beginning to come out.

It was chilly and dismal enough, and Horatia went back presently into the house. She was shocked, and hurt, and wounded. She was not angry exactly; she did not like her husband less, but she was astonished to find she had not made him happy. She was telling herself, with some quiet scorn, that he wanted a housekeeper, like Roberta, and not a wife; that if he had been really happier before she came to him, it would be perhaps as well that she should leave him now. She was in a hard and cruel frame of mind. She began to ask herself the old question, if it had not been better for them both if they had never married? She began to

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wonder how she had ever been so infatuated as to give up everything for this commonplace man. She was sitting on the sofa, with her head against her hand when he came in.

"You saw her off?" said Horatia, by way of saying something.

"Yes, we just caught the train," her husband answered, "or I should have had to bring her back."

"I am glad you were in time," said Horatia, coldly. "James, you must make Roberta understand that she is never to speak to me in such a way again."

"She meant no harm: she is very sorry for what has happened; she told me to tell you so."

"She may well be sorry," said the wife. "I am very sorry that all this has happened; it has made me know—— made me understand ——" and she burst into tears.

Poor James sank back wearily into his chair. "Go on," he said. "Tell me all your troubles, you poor woman. What has it made you understand?"

"That we have failed to make one another happy," said Horatia, in her wilfulness. "I could have borne to be miserable myself, but I confess I cannot bear to hear that you—that you were happier before I came."

"But it is not so. I have been more happy since you came, Horatia," said the doctor, with kind and wonderful forbearance. "I have been more happy and more unhappy. I have had you as well as myself to care for."

"Ah, no!" cried the woman, foolishly and madly; "it isn't so. I see it in your face, James; I have made up my mind. We shall be friends always, whatever happens, but I will go back to my aunt. Roberta, who is a drudge at heart, can come and keep your house, and satisfy you better than your wife could ever hope to do. Do you hear me?" she said, shrilly, for he did not answer. "It is because I wish to be your friend, and not your housekeeper, that I am going; it is because people who do not agree are best apart."

"I don't think so," the doctor said, slowly, and looking at her in a strange, odd sort of way. "Long habit brings folks together at last; forbearance is a wholesome discipline for one and for the other; a man and a woman who are both sincerely trying to do their duty can't fail one day to find their best happiness in it, and together. Suppose we part—it may be for ever, the ways of Providence are inscrutable—what do we gain?—a life-long, may be an eternal, loneliness and estrangement and indifference; or suppose we struggle on together for a little time, Horatia, and learn at last to love one another, at any rate to forgive, to sympathize, to endure. Can you hesitate one moment?" he said, in his sad voice.

"I should not hesitate," said Horatia, sobbing still, "if it were not for Roberta. If she comes here, I cannot and will not stay; my duty does not extend to her. James, we might love one another, even if we did not live together; I might still be your best friend."

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The poor doctor, hurt, wounded beyond expression, could listen no longer, and he got up with a great sigh, and walked away out of the room. Horatia flung herself down on the floor, and buried her face in her hands. "He doesn't mean it," she kept saying to herself. "I know he would be more happy without me. He is too good for me; I own he is too good for me. I can't love him; I can't understand him; I make him miserable. He looks wretched, and ill, and unhappy, and it is all my doing; and it is his doing that I am wretched. Why did he bring me here? I must go; it will be better for each of us. Yes, I must—I will go."

James was walking up and down outside in the garden. He once looked up through the uncurtained window, and saw her prostrate in her trouble. How could he make her more happy?—it was indeed a strange puzzle and bewilderment. He felt that she scarcely deserved kindness, and then he said to himself, kindness deserved was no kindness. "What merit have ye?" he muttered, and something more about publicans and sinners, and so once more he went back into the warm little fire-lighted room. He went up to her, but she did not heed him; he stooped over her; he picked her up off the floor. "Horatia," he said, "don't you care for me in the least; do you want to make me very lonely, very wretched? Go, if you like, but I tell you you will be more miserable than you are now. Look at me, and tell me what you mean to do."

How sad he looked, how kind, how enduring. Horatia could not help it. She was forced to give in. She still wanted to go, to turn back to her old easy life; but she had not the heart or the courage to say so. She was silent; and she left her hand in his. He accepted her silence.

"We will never talk about it again," he said. "And you must try and be more happy, my poor woman."

Then he took a cigar, and went and lit it at the fire, and took up his hat, and said he would be in directly.

"I should like a cup of tea," he said. "I am only going to smoke my cigar in the garden. Call me when it is ready."

Horatia watched him as he passed the window; and she then rang the bell and ordered some tea; and then once more sat down by the fire, staring at the embers. It was useless trying to get away. He would not let her go. By this fireside she must remain to the end. How inconceivably forbearing he was, how kind, how patient, how forgiving. Was it indeed impossible to love him? She heard his steps pacing the gravel outside. Why would he not let her go? What could make him wish that she should remain? What, indeed! Then, at last, she began suddenly to blame herself.

"I don't think I know how to appreciate his goodness," she said. "Heigho! I wish he had married a model wife, who would have known how to make him happy, and at home."

Betsy brought in the tea and the candles. Horatia started from her low chair, where she had been sitting in a sort of dream of remorse, reproach, regret, indecision, and proceeded to make it; and then she

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poked the fire, and straightened her somewhat untidy locks, and then she went and tapped at the window for James to come in.

When she looked out at the end of five minutes, she was surprised to see that a shower of rain was falling. She opened the casement, and all the wet drops came plashing into her face. She said to herself that he must have come in at the garden door, and gone up to his room. She went out into the passage, his hat was not there; she ran up the narrow staircase, and went and knocked at his door. Then she looked in. The room was dark and empty. No, he was not there; for she spoke his name and no one answered. Horatia went down into the drawing-room to wait once more. The kettle was boiling over on the hearth, the candles were flaring, for she had forgotten to shut the window. As she went to close it, a great gust of wet-laden wind surged into the room, and one of the candles went out, and the door banged.

It was dismal and cheerless enough. She began to wish that James would come in. Had he gone across the common? No; she would have seen him pass. She went to the window once more; the trees were waving a little in the darkness. The rain was falling still when she went to the garden-door and called out, "James! come to tea!" Do you not know the dreary sound of a voice calling in the darkness? She came back into the sitting-room, took up a book, and tried to read, glancing at the window every instant. Once she almost thought she saw her husband looking in, but it was only fancy. The book she had taken was the second volume of some novel. She looked on the table for the first, and then remembered that she had seen it lying, not on the table, but on the seat in the arbour at the end of the garden. And then suddenly she said to herself, "That is where James has taken shelter from the rain; how foolish of him not to come home! I think I will go and fetch him."

She went into the hall and tied on a waterproof; she pulled the hood over her head; she went to the garden door a second time, hesitated a moment, and then passed out. It was darker and wetter than she had expected, and she thought of turning back; but while she was thinking of it she was going quickly along the gravel-walk towards the arbour, brushing the wet gooseberry-bushes and box borders, a little afraid of the blackness, a little provoked with herself for her foolishness in coming. She could just make out the arbour looking very black in the night; as she came nearer, a sort of terror thrilled over her, for she thought she saw something within the darkness. "James!" she said, in a sort of frightened way, springing forward. "Why are you there, James?" she almost screamed, as she came close up. She saw—yes, surely she saw—his white face gleaming through the blackness. She began to tremble with terror, for he did not move or seem to notice her, though she came quite close up, and stood before him, gasping. With a desperate fear, she put out her hand and touched the white face. And still James did not move or speak.

A few minutes ago he had been a man with a tender heart sorely tried, with a voice to speak, with eyes to watch her reproachfully as

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she thrust him away, with a kindly, forgiving hand always ready, and willingly outstretched. And now, what was he?—who was he? What distance lay between them! Could he hear her feeble wails and outcries across the awful gulf? "James!—James!—Oh! James!" the poor woman screamed out, hardly conscious. She did not faint; she did not quite realize the awful truth—she could not.

In a minute, with hurried voices and footsteps, the maids came up the garden, and with them the boy, who had brought a lantern. And suddenly flashing through the darkness the light fell upon the dead man's face. It lit up the arbour, the dripping creepers, the wooden walls, the awful figure that was sitting there unmoved; and then Horatia fell with a sort of choking cry to the ground, prostrate in the wet, crushing the borders, the green plants that were drinking in the rain which still fell heavily.

The day had begun to dawn when Horatia came to herself, and opened her eyes in a dazed, wide, strange way. For a minute she hardly understood where she was, and then somehow she knew that she was lying on the sofa in the disordered drawing-room. A maid was kneeling beside her, the garden door was open, the keen morning air was blowing in in gusts—so grey, so chill, so silent was it, that for a moment Horatia almost fancied that it was she who had died in the night; not James, surely not James. A low man's voice at her head, saying, "She is coming to herself," thrilled through her as she thought for a moment that it might be her husband. What she seemed to remember was too horrible to be thought of—too horrible to be true. It was not true. The wild hope brought the blood into her cheeks. She moved a little in an agony of suspense, and faltered his name. Only as she spoke, somehow there was no response. The half-uttered words died away, the hands that were bathing her head ceased their toil. By the silence—by the sudden quiet—she knew that she had spoken to the empty air; that though he might hear her, he would never, never answer any more, never come, never heed her call again; and then, suddenly, with a swift pang of despair, hopeless, desperate, she realized it all.

Caton, who had almost hated her, who had said to himself that he would be her judge—she had killed her husband, she had wearied and embittered the last few hours of his life, and he, Caton, would tell her the truth, if there was no one else to speak it—Caton, who, in his indignation, had thought all this, could not find it in his heart now to utter one harsh word. He came round, and stood looking compassionately at her white wan face lying back, with all the black rippling hair pushed away; and as he stood there, she put up her hands and covered her eyes, and shivered. How could he judge one so forlorn? Instead of the hard words he had meant to use, he only said, "He had feared it all along, Mrs. Rich. He was not afraid for himself, but for those he loved. It was a heart disease. It was hopeless from the first; he knew it, but he would not let me tell you. He was the best, the dearest——" The young man's voice broke as he spoke; he turned away, and went and stood at the window.

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There was a long silence. At last, Horatia, speaking in her faint voice, said—

"I want you to send for Roberta. Can you send now, at once?"

"I telegraphed last night," Caton answered, "when I thought there might be hope. She will be here in the morning. I will meet her and bring her to you."

Once more Horatia moved; she got up from the couch where she had been lying, and she tottered forward a few steps towards the door.

Caton sprang after her. "Are you going upstairs to lie down? Where are you going?"

"Where, oh, where, indeed, am I going?" cried poor Horatia. "Oh, my James, my James!" and with a sort of cry, she flung herself back into a great arm-chair, which was near. "Go—pray, go away," she sobbed to them; "only tell me when Roberta comes." And so, scared, reluctant, they went away and left her.

Caton never forgot that terrible dawning. The black garden, the white mist creeping along the ground, the chill light spreading, the widow's sobs and sorrowful outcries breaking the silence of the night.

It was Roberta who roused poor Horatia from a sort of swoon of grief and remorse—Roberta, while trembling, silent, who led her into the next room, where all was so peaceful that their sobs were hushed; so sacred, that it seemed to them as if it was a profanity to even complain. Only once more Horatia burst out. "Forgive me, James!" she suddenly cried, falling on her knees, and then she wildly and imploringly looked up at Roberta's set white face. The girl changed, melted, faintly smiled, and stooped and kissed her sister.

"Oh, Horatia, what has he to do with trouble and injury and sorrow now? Forgiveness belongs to this world; only peace, only love to the next."

Horatia was very ill for a long time after this. Roberta was able to stay with James's wife, and to nurse her very faithfully and tenderly in her sorrows. In time Horatia got well, and prepared to live her old life again. It was the old life, but the woman was not the same woman. And James was carried away from his sister, from his wife, from his home, from his daily work. He was still alive somehow when Roberta thought of him. She could see his face, hear his voice, love him more tenderly even than in his life.

One day Caton told Berta, as he had told Horatia, that James had thought himself seriously ill for some short time, and though he did not consider the danger imminent, he had taken pains to put his affairs in order, and to leave enough behind for the provision of those he loved.

"When did he first know——"

Roberta hesitated, and her eyes filled with tears, and Caton said that his first attack was one night when they were sitting together in James's study. Mrs. Rich had gone off to her grand relations. "I remember she came back and talked about her partners," he said.

"She did not know?" Berta said.

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"Perhaps you never heard that he fainted away at that party at Mrs. Dumbleton's?" Caton went on, sighing. "He went up to town next day to see a doctor. I am not sure that he was right to keep it secret. He would not let me speak. I very nearly told you once."

And Berta remembered the day she had met Caton on the road, and when she would not stop to speak to him. Things were changed now, for they had met in the lane by chance, and were walking on side by side towards the common. The common rippled westward, scattered with stones, and clumps of furze, and dells and hollows; geese cackled; sunsets streamed across it; roads branched here and there leading to other green lanes, or to distant villages, or to London, whose neighbouring noise and rush seemed to make this quiet country suburb seem more quiet. The river runs between these furze-grown commons and London. People coming from the city, as they cross the bridge, seem to leave their cares and busy concerns behind them, and to breathe more freely as they come out upon the fresh, wind-blown plains.

Caton and Roberta walked along one of these straight roads, talking sadly enough; her eyes were full of tears. Caton's voice was broken as he spoke of what was past; to walk along with Roberta, even in this sorrowful companionship, was a sort of happiness: but even this was not to last for long; she was going; Horatia was going; and Caton was to succeed to the old place, with all its sad memories, and he thought to himself that he had lost his friend, and that Roberta would never care for him, and that life was a dismal thing, and he almost wished it was over. And he said almost as much. To complain was a consolation in itself when it was Roberta who heard him. They had come to the place where their two roads parted; Roberta said good-by, and looked up shy and gentle, blushing under her black hat. Caton put out his hand, and said: "This has been our last walk. You will go that way by the gate, and I shall walk straight on across the common, and we may perhaps never even meet again." His voice sounded sad and reproachful, though he did not know it; and Berta's blushes suddenly faded, and she looked away, and did not speak.

A number of birds flew over their heads as they stood there, parting. There was nobody near to heed them, only an old grey horse browsing the turf, a little flock of geese clustering round a pool hard by. Berta saw it all in a strange vivid way. She stood there, reluctant to wait, and yet still more reluctant to go. The roads gleamed farther and farther asunder; she hesitated, wondered, waited still; but she did not know all that she had tacitly decided until she looked up at last, and met Caton's honest bright eyes with her gentle glance. And so at last he was made happy, and the woman he had loved so well had learnt to care for him, touched by his faithful friendship for her brother, his faithful devotion to herself.

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Contemporary Italian Poets.

No. 2.—Giuseppe Giusti.

The eminent place which the name of Giusti deservedly holds among the poets of modern Italy was attained by him in the course of very few though very eventful years; and his wide-spread fame rests on a collection of poems so small as to occupy the pages of but one very moderate-sized volume. His works, even while in manuscript, had won for themselves a foremost place in the hearts of his countrymen of all ranks. They were the dread of despotic oppressors as a trenchant and terrible weapon in the hands of the oppressed. If ever the needs of an evil time called loudly for the advent of a champion, sure of eye and doughty of arm, to run a tilt against the hypocrisies and abuses of an utterly false and debased state of society, festering under the infectious influences of an effete and corrupt government, they did so during the years immediately preceding the convulsion-throes of '48 in Tuscany, the poet's birthplace. There, as all over Italy with the exception of Piedmont, the body social was lying in the sickly swoon of exhaustion which divided one frenzied attempt at self-liberation from another. National feeling was proscribed and hunted down. The very word *patria* was blotted out of the libretti of theatrical entertainments by the censors of the press. Education and morality were carefully kept at the lowest possible ebb by a government whose strength lay in the corruption of its people. The stilted affectations of Della Cruscan purism cramped and starved every form of literary creation, and no aspirant to poetic fame could utter his message to the world with any show of authenticity, unless it were first swathed, mummy fashion, in endless folds of euphuistic diffuseness, till all vital power was squeezed out of it in the operation.

It was of this world, filled with hollow and sapless formulas, with degrading fetish-worship, and moral and political dishonesty of every shade, that Giusti, the young law-student, freshly transplanted into it from his Pisa University life, was to become the stern and indignant satirist, and to lend, by his stinging diatribes, a potent lever to the great movement of Italian regeneration, which lay as yet afar off in the mists of the future. That simple monument, consisting of a life-sized statue of the poet, which marks his resting-place beside the western door of the noble old church of San Miniato al Monte, where the new cemetery of Florence looks so airily over the city and the Val d'Arno, may well be a place of pilgrimage to all true Italians, as the grave of one of the foremost and bravest pioneers on the path of their country's progress.

Giusti's birthplace was the pretty little townlet of Monsummano, situated in the pleasant and picturesque hill country called Val di Nievole,

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between Pescia and Pistoja. His father, Cavaliere Domenico Giusti, who belonged to an ancient and wealthy Pesciatine family, resided at Monsummano till his death, which took place at a great age some two years ago. Liberalism seems to have been an heirloom in the race, for the Cavaliere's father was deep in the councils of the sagacious reforming Grand Duke, Peter Leopold, and was one of his chief advisers in framing the excellent code called after him the Leopoldine laws.

Little Giuseppe Giusti was by no means a pattern child. He had nothing of the studious silent boy of genius about him. While yet of very tender age, all Monsummano could testify to the perilous escapades and fantastic monkey-tricks which had more than once put his life in peril. With book learning his parents plagued him but little. His beautiful and highly cultivated mother, who doted on her boy, had sore trouble in teaching him to read; and when at seven years old he was sent to begin his education under the care of a crabbed old priest at Pistoja, his chief stock of knowledge consisted in the notes of music and Dante's grand episode of Count Ugolino! The *reverendo* had been a tutor for several years at Vienna, and had brought away something of the severity of German drilling in his method of instruction. The five years Giusti spent under his care were neither pleasant nor very profitable, for in the delightful fragment of autobiography inserted in the Life prefixed to the two volumes of his letters by his friend Frassi, the poet says:—

"I stayed with him five years, and brought away a good many floggings, and a perfect knowledge of the spelling-book; not a shadow of the Latin he had taught me in those five years; a small glimmering of history which I had *not* learnt; and, into the bargain, a good deal of fretfulness, and distaste for everything, and an entire persuasion that I was good for nothing."

A passionate love of long country rambles, and a strong propensity to "romance-spinning," induced by being kept shut up without employment in his tutor's darkened room in summer afternoons, while the *padre* took his siesta, were the most legible influences the old priest's teaching left on his mind.

Next came school life at Lucca, where Giusti was distinguished by no great aptitude for the classics, but by a vivid and tenacious memory for all that endless store of popular proverb and song in the purest and pithiest Tuscan idiom with which the region abounds. In 1826 he entered the University of Pisa as a law-student, and during the four years which he spent there, a glimmering of his future excellence as a poet began to manifest itself to the circle in which he lived, in the easy wit and readiness of some burlesque compositions in verse, which gained him no little social celebrity. Giusti always, in after life, looked back with peculiar pleasure to his college days, which were also the days when, with an ardent little knot of somewhat fast-going friends and fellow-students, he joined heart and hand in the noble though restless aspirations after freedom for "Young Italy." There is a half-comic, half-wistful

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tenderness for those old days in his *Memorie di Pisa*, written near twenty years later, which is both pleasant and touching; and many of the friends he then made surrounded him with affectionate care and sympathy in the sad period of his untimely decline.

A dull, musty set of lawyer's chambers in Florence, where he prosecuted, after a desultory fashion, his studies for the Tuscan bar, was the next halting-place in the life of the future satirist. "Nothing came," as he used to say himself, "of the law-readings and the pandects of Justinian," for Giusti was never called to the bar; but he soon found the key-note of his true vocation at Florence, in the study of the weak and wicked world around him. Gifted with a keen perception, which searched out the very root of his country's corruptions, and a style sharp and polished as the best Damascus blade, wherewith to wage warfare against the tough fibrous jungle-growth of old abuses, he very soon broke silence and startled the morbid apathy of Italian social life by a series of unerring blows aimed at its ridicules and vices; while the political authorities positively foamed with rage and terror at the knowledge that such tremendous blasphemy against the divine right of their liege lady Austria, as spoke out in the young poet's *Dies Iræ*—a poem written on the death of the Emperor Francis—was circulating in manuscript through every class of society in Italy, in sheer contempt of all the rigours of the censorship.

A considerable number of Giusti's most famous satires were known by heart in every liberal circle for years before they appeared in print. Three clandestine editions of his poems were first published by the Lugano press, but were a source of great vexation and displeasure to the author, not only on account of the insertion into them of several juvenile pieces, which he was most unwilling to acknowledge, but because many poems by other writers were admitted into the collection. In 1845 the first authentic edition of Giusti's satires was published at Bastia, without the author's name. It was, as may be supposed, stringently prohibited and fiercely hunted out by the police, but, as always happens in such cases, no one was long without the book who cared to have it, and many of its witty phrases and sharply pointed epithets soon passed into proverbs, and became part and parcel of the popular idiom.

The Cruscanti, or stiff-necked classicists of the literary world of Italy, were at first scarcely more inclined to look favourably on the new satires, which were in all men's mouths, than were the cringeing placemen, the government spies, and Jesuits, whom they scourged. Giusti had committed the sin, unpardonable in the eyes of the Della Cruscan school, of writing in the living language of his country: the simple, powerful, picturesque idiom of the old Tuscan speech, which still flourishes almost unchanged in his native district of the Pistojan hills.

The poet's love was as intense as it was exclusive for this his beautiful *favella*, and he was never weary of asserting its merits over the mincing *concetti* and washy verbiage of Academical prudery. In the brief preface to the Bastia edition of his poems, he warns his readers that he can offer

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them only thoughts clothed "in household garb" (*alla casalinga*); and in the charming letter to Andrea Francioni, which is prefixed to his *Tuscan Proverbs*, published at Florence nearly ten years after his death, he congratulates himself, in a loving outburst of patriotic feeling, on having been born in a land which, "besides its holiday garments, keeps in its wardrobe so rich a dressing-gown for every-day wear."

Among the political satires, some of the most celebrated are, the already mentioned *Dies Iræ; The Boot*, a masterly retrospect of Italy's political life from ancient times till now; *Don Girella's Toast*, the comic autobiography of a political turncoat; *The Coronation*, written on the Austrian Emperor's accession to the throne, and containing full-length portraits of all the then rulers of Italy; *The Congress of the Birri*, in which the worshipful brotherhood of government spies set forth their views and maxims of wholesome rule with infinite wit and eloquence; *The Land of the Dead*, an outpouring of noble indignation against the heartless deriders of enslaved Italy; *An Apology for the Lottery*, a powerful picture of the hideous social evils caused among the Tuscan people by that most fruitful and immoral source of government revenue; and *Gingillino*, a far longer and more varied poem than any of the preceding ones. It is a biting satire on the endless tribe of needy intriguers for place and power, and, though written for Tuscany, is only too well adapted to the habits of the same evil species in any country. It describes the hero, Gingillino (whose name is the diminutive of the word "gingillo," a worthless trifle), wriggling through a tortuous career of petty artifice towards his coveted aim, and this wretched political Fribble is, in fact, a type of the mean place-hunters (working their way to power by a course of small rogueries) who were the plague-sore of the land under the old régime.

Of those satires which attacked the social cankers of the day, some of the finest are, *The Marriage Contract*, between a needy noble and a rich usurer's daughter, repulsive both in mind and person; *The Dance*, a poem in three parts, which scourges the vices of a dissolute and ignorant aristocracy; *The Memories of Pisa*, a chapter of regrets for unsophisticated student-life; *A Sample of the rising Generation*, which draws a fearful picture of the enervated and debased youth of Tuscany before '48; *A Public Singer's Cold*, a satire on the exaggerated worship bestowed in these days on musical artistes; and many others of great merit, although the political satires contain far the nobler and higher flights of genius.

The metres used by Giusti are generally very short; his rhymes artfully interlaced; his humour, as all true humour should be, terse and concentrated; the style of every line he ever wrote, whether of poetry or prose, highly polished with patient labour to the most graceful melody and exact significance, although the idiom be that of the Tuscan peasantry from whose lips he was wont to gather the rich and pithy phraseology in which he delighted. Moreover, a great number of the words, allusions, and proverbial sayings introduced are exclusively local, necessitating, for strangers at least, if not for Italians from other parts of the peninsula, the

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use of a glossary, such as is appended to Le Mounier's edition published in 1854. All these peculiarities render the satires especially rebellious to translation, and make many parts of them quite incapable of faithful rendering into a foreign language, unless at the expense of too much of that sharp bitter significance and ringing cadence which stamp the original, and which any attempt at paraphrase is sure to sacrifice.

When all Italy rose in 1848 in her vain but gallant struggle for freedom, Giusti, as may be supposed, was not among the last of her sons to lend his hand to the contest. Not that he at any time leant towards republicanism, as several of his poems can testify; for he, in common with the most illustrious Italians who were actors in that eventful time, stoutly maintained his constitutional principles, even to the bringing down on himself the ribald obloquy of mob orators as a traitorous deserter from his country's cause, in that distracted masquing time of '49, with its Guerrazzi dictatorship, which issued, of necessity, in shameful defeat and Radetzky despotism. Giusti was returned as member for Borgo a Buggiano, in Val di Nievole, to the first Tuscan National Assembly, in 1848, and a second time, after its dissolution, in the following year, to the great rage and discomfiture of his cowardly accusers. His health had, however, been wavering for several years before, and the fatigue and poignant anxieties of that disastrous session did much towards entirely oversetting his nervous and delicate constitution. He had never married, though public rumour taxed him, at different times during his career, with more than one tender attachment; but his household ties were of the fondest, and never had man won for himself truer or more loving friends than he possessed among the worthiest and most distinguished of his countrymen. But the disappointment of a life-long hope is a sharp irritant to the wasting of hectic fever, and poor Giusti, weak and spiritless, wandered about for a few last sad months from Florence to Pescia, from Pescia to Leghorn, and thence back again to Florence, tormented by the pulmonary disease which was consuming him, and still more by the sight of the ruthless military tyranny which the Austrian occupation daily inflicted on his passionately loved country. His very poetic power seems to have flickered low in these last days, and nearly died out before him; for the poems written after 1847 are few, pale, and fragmentary, with the exception of one, *The Republic*, which lashes the pseudo-apostles of the Phrygian cap with all the pungent verve of his brightest days, and which reads a terribly prophetic warning to such as even, at the present day, uphold the Imperial nostrum of an Italian Confederation, telling them that,—

> If the loaf ye crush and crumble,
> Ultramontane jaws will mumble
> All its parts more easily.

Giusti's illness terminated in death on the 31st of March, 1850, at the house of his dear and tried friend the Marchese Gino Capponi, in Florence. When borne to his resting-place in the new burying-ground of San Miniato,

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the Grand-Ducal government used every means except absolute force to prevent the funeral being made an occasion of public mourning.

Besides the before-mentioned Le Mounier's edition of Giusti's poems, which comprises all those published by himself in 1845 and 1847, together with several others found among his papers, his collection of 3,000 Tuscan proverbs, with illustrative notes, was published at Florence in 1858, and in 1860 appeared two volumes of his Correspondence, containing some 400 letters, as perfect in style as they are simple and earnest in feeling. This unrivalled style of his, so playful, energetic, and unaffected, was only attained by indefatigable care and study. He copied and re-copied even the least important of his letters; nay, he would add finishing touches to a rough draft, after he had posted the letter itself. If such was the attention he gave to his correspondence, it is easy to believe that the labour bestowed on his poetical compositions was enormous. His nearest friends declare that, when to all appearance complete, he would lay by his work for a good while, and "strive to forget it," then recommence the task again, "thoughtfully weighing it all, from the ideas to the commas," hardly leaving a single verse unaltered, and trying its effect from time to time upon different auditors, even in the humblest walks of life; yet it seems almost impossible to believe, while reading them, that some of his finest passages should not have been thrown off in the fire of *vivâ voce* inspiration, so unstudied and unstrained do they appear.

Of the following passages selected for translation from Giusti's satires, the first is an extract from *Gingillino*, being that part of the poem in which its typical hero, unskilled as yet in the intricacies of his trade, is instructed therein by an ancient dame of high standing on the Pension-list, the widow of a wealthy, unscrupulous financier, and of course thoroughly versed in all the arts of place-hunting. Her ladyship's "method" takes up almost the entire extract.

The second extract consists of the entire poem entitled *Il Giovinetto*, a name which must be translated by the periphrasis, *a sample of the rising generation.* Such as Giusti here holds them up to infamy and scorn, were the majority of the youth of Italy before her revolution days. Such, thank heaven! they are no longer; and in this great and speedy change lies her surest and most living promise of social regeneration.

The third piece chosen for translation is part of a poem which exhibits the Tuscan satirist in a more amiable and playful mood than is his usual wont. It is styled *L'Amor Pacifico*, and ironically exalts the advantages of a quiet, comfortable, jog-trot attachment over the feverish, romantic emotions, the bliss and bale of a "sensation" engagement, with all its following of agitation and distraction. The poem opens with four stanzas, containing a sort of dedication of the tale and its moral to the poet's ladye-love, who appears to have inclined, like himself, to the *agitato* style of tenderness, and she is duly exhorted to take pattern by the even-tempered sleek "turtle-doves" of the story. These opening verses, as well as a large subsequent portion of the poem, are of necessity

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omitted in the translation, from their too great demand on limited space—the lovers' way of life and the episode of the declaration being strung together in such sequence as to form a comprehensible whole.

GINGILLINO.

Instructions to a Young Aspirant for Office.

* * * *

That you must cut all liberals whatever,
All men of genius, all the "dangerous" crew,
Not prate of books nor papers, but endeavour
To prove that they are all High-Dutch to you;
That you must bolt your heart, and hold your tongue,
You've known yourself, I'm well aware, for long.

These things are of the science of omission.
Of that you've learned as much as I can tell.
To teach you such would be a vain addition;
Logs to the forest; water to the well.
You've made a first-rate start. There's nought remaining
But to receive your second half of training.

And, first and foremost, learn to bend your back!
Be veneration's self personified.
Dress ill. your clothes should fit you like a sack
And always take some big-wig for your guide.
The cowl *does* make the monk, in such a case,
And the wall's valued by its plaster face.

Acquire that see-saw aptness for deceiving—
That eye which heeds, or heeds not, for its end;
That slippery trick, 'twixt doubting and believing,
Which says both yes and no—you comprehend!
That sweet and sour, in short, which stamps the race,
From Spy to Gold-stick, all as men in place.

No beard, of course!—A man in public service
(The thing's well proven, plain, and natural),
The more effete he both in face and nerve is,
The more he's sure to please his Principal.
But, I must say, to help you on in this,
Your mother has not done *her* part amiss.

To mass and sermon never fail to go!
Be sure you're *seen*, before you say a prayer,
And choose your time and bench to make most show
When some great man, some Commissary's there.
Nay, stand on guard just where the lustral vase is,
And give him holy-water as he passes.

Get introduced, and every blessèd night
Visit some lout they've made a Minister.
There, choose your tune and change your stops aright,
According as his tastes or whims prefer.
And if tomfoolery's the thing for winning,
Play the tomfool, and set the folks a-grinning!

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If there be cards, and gravity's the rule,
Oblige him; take a hand; do all you're able.
Laugh if you lose. Gulp if you're called a fool.
Be the "Pope Sixth,"* the butt of all the table.
When he has fleeced, and mocked, and called you dunny,
Your host must pay you with the public money!

Keep him supplied with news, and ferret out
Fresh scandal, gossip, all that folks will tell you;
And, so to speak, what the whole town's about,
Down from his Highness even to Stenterello.†
Whether from meanness, mightiness, or leisure,
Gossip we know's his Highness's best pleasure.

If, by the Devil's luck, your man fall ill,
Visits, my friend! long visits, and in plenty!
Work the M.D.'s and druggists with a will!
Run up his stairs ten thousand times, or twenty.
Stick poultices and plasters as desired;
In short, do——any dirty work required!

If he get well, the credit's yours, you know.
But if you see him growing weak and worse,
Why, "*kiss the door-lock*," as they say, and go!
Leaving the priest to fill your place, of course.
Dead men lie still, and live ones soon grow quiet,
So, toady where you gain some profit by it.

As to his womankind too, have a care;
For in their hands, believe me, you may find
Perchance a ladder, and perchance a snare;
So tack about according to the wind.
Keep them well pleased, be friends with every one,
But ere you venture farther —"Gently, John!"

If the wife's young, submission and respect
For her and all her household! if she's not,
Your arm is hers at all times, recollect!
Coax her; escort her; serve her; and what not.
Old women, friend! old women pull you through it.
They tug as they get tugged; I ought to know it!

Beware the menial tribe, above all other
Venal and false; grease well their wheels, and place
No stone before them. "*One hand washes t'other*,"
They say, "*and both together wash the face*."
So goes the world-game still. "Ca' me, ca' thee"—
When you've your reasons for 't, especially.

---

* A term taken from the game at cards called *le Minchiate*, at which the loser and laughing-stock of the other players is called the "Pope Sixth."

† Stenterello is the well-known mask or personification of low Florentine character on the Italian stage.

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Each man in power—a rule that never fails—
Keeps a fine valet greater than himself,
Who takes his lord's belongings for his vails,
Just as his lordship prigs the nation's pelf.
If yours have one, close friends you must become
As bread and cheese, and call him "Jack" or "Tom."

Say there arise a scandal, a dispute,
A hurly-burly in your patron's house—
"*Know-nought knew much who knew when to be mute,*"
Says the old saw. *Be* mute, then, as a mouse.
Great men will sometimes act like fools, 'tis certain,
In their own homes. Be ours to —— drop the curtain!

In flattery be bold, and fire away.
Give it him right and wrong, at any cost.
Praise his great genius; praise his wits astray;
Praise all he's done; if nothing, praise that most.
And where you can discern nor rhyme nor reason,
Praise and repraise him, in or out of season!

Hook a rich wife; and laugh at dignity.
(Of *principle* no mention need be made!)
For if their Mightinesses' high decree
Should yoke you to a frightful shrew, a jade,
So but the pill be gilded to your tongue,
Swallow it, and the frontispiece be hung!

Jump at all hints. Keep begging every way.
Take all they give you, so they let you serve;
But—beg! "*The toad refused to beg,*" they say,
"*And therefore got no tail.*" Besides, observe
That if not propped and fostered by our need,
Great men's authority's a dream indeed.

A Premier's soul's made of the self-same hash
Which serves for yours and mine, or pretty nigh;
And the vain fool who spends the public cash
Takes credit for the sunshine in July,
Deeming, in pompous nullity of mind,
There's nothing he can't do, if so inclined.

Never be scared by that wide sea of prate,
That putting off of favours for all time—
Those may-be's, but's, and if's, of men of State
The everlasting slang and pantomime—
That still recurring "We must think!" "We'll see!"
Of those big blockheads who are *up* the tree.

Remember to ignore and overpass
Each rude rebuff, each peevish look and tone,
And, like Pope Sixtus, write yourself an ass
If you're resolved to reach *your* papal throne.
After the bitters sweets will come at length,
And sturdy begging beat close-fisted strength!

With profit Gingillino did attend
To the sage preachment of his vulpine friend.
He went; he knuckled down; he bared his crown;
He crept, crawled, coaxed and cringed to sword and gown;

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And when they'd dried him, tried him, sifted him, drifted him
From Dan to Beersheba, at last they lifted him—
When the whole process they'd gone through and through,
With rites baptismal and with chrismal too—
Their heaven of three-piled roguedom to ascend,
Took him within the fold—and that's his end!

A SAMPLE OF THE RISING GENERATION.

Poor wretch! he lays him prostrate,
  At scarce eighteen, to mourn
His windy dis-illusions,
  And mould to sourest scorn
His beardless lip unripe—
Aye reeking with the pipe.

Pecking stray scraps of all things,
  With shrunken dried-up noddle;
Yet knowing nought of any,
  He's fain to coax and coddle
His mind into a doze
Of make-believe repose.

A long-haired, washed-out copy
  Of Absalom, his trade is
To mutely dangle after
  "Uncomprehended" ladies.
Intent on sinful scheming,
His very vice is seeming.

And while he quaffs with longing
  The vapid poison mixed
By some fair Penelopeän,
  Who halves her heart betwixt
Paramour and confessor,
As love or virtue press her,

The poor stage-Petrarch, crazy
  With heat of feckless passion,
Whining a dismal ditty
  Out of his soul's starvation,
Be-rhymes that parlous jangle
Where Vice and Virtue wrangle.

Limp—half-alive—spasmodic—
  A guttering candle's end—
As putative a lover
  As putative a friend;
A mighty frown he apes,
Half poetry—half gapes.

And in asthmatic doggrel
  Dares stutter forth God's name.
But if belief *be* in him,
  It sputters like a flame
To its damp wick ill-suited;
Half-Christian—thrice diluted

With songs about "the People,"
  "Italy," "Progress," "Light"—
Stale cant of our Arcadians!—
  Through ball-rooms every night
Neck-deep in feasts he roves;
Martyr in primrose gloves!

To cloak the hollow weakness
  Of his lame wit, he wails
About his "nascent genius
  Whose broken pinion fails:"
That old conceited cry
All seedling pedants try.

He says he's "like a flower
  Which falls before its time,
For want of dews more healing
  And a more genial clime,"
But lacks the pluck and sense
To own his impotence.

Rich in foreboded promise,
  The first step, down goes he!
Then lisps that "he's a-dying."
  Of what? The thrush, may be!
O thou light worthless thing!
Thou bud deflowered in Spring!

'Tis thine effete aspirings,
  And cravings, which are nought
But embryos and abortions
  Of violated thought;
Thy slip-shod fancy straying
Like Madness gone a-Maying;

'Tis *these* that hold thee captive
  In purposeless misrule;
And, by thine over-striving
  To snatch at life, O fool!
Thou writh'st in limbo lonely,
Palsied bantling only!

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LOVE AND A QUIET LIFE.

* * * *

Two faithful souls, for twenty years and more,
  Adored each other in pacific vein;
The fair the name of Veneranda bore,
  And Ser Taddeo was yclept the swain—
Full-bodied names, slow-cadenced in emission,
Fit for two tranquil folks in prime condition.

The lady was a placid roly-poly—
  A very carnival personified;
In look for all the world resembling wholly
  A plump fowl fed on rice for Christmas-tide.
Her heavy gait said, "This side up! With care!"
One felt, a mile off, her narcotic air.

Fat as a friar, and paunchy as a sack,
  Her dear Taddeo's form was like big B.
A comfortable soul! whose fine broad back
  Seemed made to sit for all eternity.
A lump of dough that walked, paused, puffed, and vied
With a cock-turkey in his fan-tailed pride!

* * * *

Taddeo by his charmer would sit down,
  With "How d'ye do, love? How's your appetite?
"Indeed," quoth she, "I can't complain my own."
  "And you, do tell me, did you sleep last night?"
"Eleven hours, my dearest dear, right through."
"I think at noon I must have dreamt of you."

And there for half the day he'd sit and prose,
  Stock still, at ease, as dumb as oil; or let
Long yawns in plain chant quaver thro' his nose;
  And, as 'twere syrup or sweet anisette,
Suck in content the tranquil nonchalance
Of his belovëd's full-orbed countenance.

The while that lukewarm lady, soft and slow,
  Reclining, held her knitting for the nonce,
(Taking a stitch up each half hour or so)
  Bleated small simpers at her darling dunce;
And asked him now and then if he would take
A sip of "that Vin Santo" for her sake.

And oft when evening signalled with the dark
  The hour to wend to opera or play,
Quoth Veneranda, nodding o'er her work
  (Not stirring from the sofa, by the way,
And yawning first), "Love! is the weather clear?"
"Oh! splendid!" "What's o'clock? do tell me, dear!"

"Just eight." "What! eight? I'll go and dress directly."
  "Ay, do!" "But won't it bore you so to wait?"
"No, no; don't hurry!" "Oh! I dress *so* quickly."
  (And there they squat the while, as fixed as fate.)
"What time, Taddeo?" "Nine." "Well, I suppose
I must go dress," but deuce a bit she goes!

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"Taddeo, dearest! will my black gown do?"
"Yes; wear the black one." "Must I take my shawl?
Advise me, do!" "Ay, take it." "But, you know,
The weather's warm!" "Best not then, after all."
But there they stick; until she asks again,
"What *is* the time, dear love?" "It's half-past ten."

"Good gracious! Where's that maid? I wish she'd come?"
"But why go just to see the curtain drop?"
"Another time. To-night we'll stay at home."
"You're more than right." "Well, then, it's time to sup!"
And at this breakneck pace, as you may guess,
All other matters of their lives progress.

* * * *

O blessed peace! O close and sacred tie!
Long life to Veneranda and her dove!
But I must needs inform you how and why
This faithful pair first told their tender love.
At a friend's house they'd dined, and when upstairs
Found themselves side by side in two arm-chairs.

When half an hour had mutely passed away,
Taddeo plucked up heart, and broke the ice.
"Pray, madam . . . did you like the cream to-day?"
"Delicious!" "I'm so glad you thought it nice.
The ham, too?" "Exquisite!" "And then the birds?"
"Perfection!" "And the fish?" "Beyond all words!

'Tis true that we had hardly room to sit."
"Nay; 'twas a pleasure, when one sate by *you*;
But if, dear ma'am, I jogged your arm a bit,
Trust me, 'twas what I could not choose but do."
"Don't mention it! *You* suffered, I suspect?
I'm stout, you see." "An excellent defect!"

"Indeed?" "Indeed! That face now, in my eyes,
Blooms like May-day. Long may it last in blow!"
"I'm healthy!" "Healthy! Fresh as Paradise!"
"Come, come! I'm somewhat stout!" "And better so.
For my part, if I might, I'd very fain
Have leave to call upon you, now and then."

"Oh! you'd be bored!" "I bored! What words are these?
'Twould rather be my best and primest pleasure."
"Fie! Now you're flattering! Well! come when you please!"
"I think, dear madam, in no common measure,
Our characters are fitted to unite.
What do *you* say?"
"La! Well—perhaps they might!"

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In the Land of the Eisteddfod.

LIKE a great many other people Mr. Stainley of Brompton had occasionally seen the word Eisteddfod in print, but its nature as well as its pronunciation had always been an absolute mystery to him. Still, he was ever ready to learn, and it was with the greatest delight that he accepted the proposition of his friend Mr. Busby to join him in an expedition with a view to ascertaining something about this mysterious thing. For Mr. Busby had been invited to Llanrhyddiog by his aunt, for the occasion, with permission to bring a friend.

First, Mr. Busby did his best to give his friend an idea as to the way in which the word Eisteddfod was pronounced. He said that if written properly it would be something like Eyestethvod; and as to its nature, it might be said to be a great meeting of the bards. Mr. Stainley wanted to know what a bard was, and Mr. Busby said he believed anybody in Wales could be a bard if he chose; and he was not obliged to have a harp. But he promised to introduce Mr. Stainley to Professor Jones, who would tell him all about it.

Five or six hours' travelling by the Great Western the next day brought them to within four miles of their destination; and as they commenced their journey by road to Llanrhyddiog, they were practically advised of the evils attending the want of punctuality, which is a characteristic of the Welsh people. It is quite useless arranging things in Wales, for your true Welshman treats time and appointments with contempt. He prefers to muddle on until he muddles into a rut, and in that rut the wheel runs sluggishly, obstinately, grinding down all obstacles. It had been arranged that the old lady's phaeton should be waiting for her visitors at the railway station; but somebody had evidently forgotten all about it, or it had gone to meet some one else, or the driver had gone on an errand with it first. Under these circumstances, there was nothing to be done but to ride on a shaky omnibus that was not much bigger than a large-sized packing-case, drawn by a desponding horse, and driven by a large-jawboned, sour, hungry-looking Welshman. As a rule, the driver of a public conveyance is regarded as a kind of entertainment. The wit of an Irish car-driver is proverbial, and the mysterious dignity of an English stager invests his remarks with authority. The contrast was so great between all other known coachmen and this Welshman, that Mr. Busby felt absolutely guilty in having brought his friend into a land that could produce such an object as the driver of a coach endowed with neither wit nor wisdom. The influence of the man's silent presence was so depressing that both travellers felt wonderfully

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relieved as they entered "The World's End" at Llanrhyddiog, where David Jones, the landlord, received them with a degree of hospitality almost enthusiastic. David Jones was cherishing a hope that the gentlemen who had travelled on his "mail-coach" would stay in his house. But he seemed to be afflicted with a feeling of caution, visible in a lingering expression in the corner of his eye, as if he would like to have a good look at his guests unobserved. It was a kind of, How much shall I ask? or, What can I get out of you? or, Will you cheat me? look. It is the custom of men all over the world, with few exceptions, to ask for more than they mean to take, and offer less than they mean to give; but nowhere can the system be carried to so great an extent as in a Welsh market. Your thorough Welshman will out-Jew a Jew at a bargain.

Lounging about the entrance to the World's End, as our friends entered, and seated in its kitchen, were some dozen or so of colliers, drearily smoking. They had just come up from the pit, and their garments were very diversified with patches and coal-dust. There was a remarkable contrast to the native population in another room of the inn, in the person of a rather coarse-looking stranger, who smacked his lips as he ate his dinner, and made a perfect demonstration of being there, as if he were not at all afraid, and wished people to know it.

"A fine day," suggested Mr. Stainley.

"Oh, yes, it's a fine day," said Mr. Gulpin, the stranger. "Belong to these parts, sir?"

"No, thank you," said Busby.

"Same to you," replied Mr. Gulpin. He had come down on business, he added, but he thought he might possibly put in an appearance at the Eisteddfod.

On the next morning the church bells of Llanrhyddiog rang their best. Most of the shops were closed, and the houses seemed to have emptied themselves into the streets. The day was a dry and a warm one, and dust was consequently plentiful. The dust of a Welsh town, in the neighbourhood of a colliery, is of the blackest description, for it is principally composed of coal-dust that lies about the pathway like so much black lead. Lolling about the town, some sitting on the parapet of the bridge over the stream, were the colliers, dressed in their best. The best of a Welsh collier is a suit of black cloth of ordinary cut, and a common cloth cap. For the most part, when so dressed, they will keep their hands in their pockets, a luxury their daily labours deprive them of. These colliers do not talk much, but now and then one of them will pass a remark in Welsh on the figure, dress, or manner of a stranger passing by, and then his companions show their yellow teeth in a dull, dry way, and cross or uncross a leg, or otherwise shift their position, to shew they are alive to and appreciate the joke. The great men of the town were going to and fro, wearing on their breasts imitation leeks, made of green ribbon, and metal Prince of Wales's feathers. The women, too, wore their tall

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hats; and such of them as could not afford such gorgeous attire, contented themselves with that oddly-shaped straw head-covering that is neither a bonnet nor a hat, and partakes of the nature of both, being expressly adapted for the use of those who desire to carry loads to market on their heads. The dresses of the women were very warm and comfortable, composed of linsey; nearly all being of the same pattern of black and red stripes, on a brown ground, arranged in a novel manner, with the front of the skirt taken up by the hem to the waist, and pinned behind, as some women in England are wont to do when they carry water. The petticoat thus exhibited was of similar material, and reached to within a foot of the ground. Most of the dresses are partly open at the neck, and display an ample white neckerchief, and the shoulders were covered by a woollen shawl of similar pattern, and in some cases of a brilliant red colour. Many of the faces of the older women seemed pinched and contracted; with few exceptions their skin seemed parched and dried up, and their dark eyes seemed almost terror-stricken, making them look as if they were in constant fear. These women were hurrying about in twos and threes; and it was noticeable here, as in most Welsh towns, that the appearance of the women was more refined than the appearance of the men.

The Eisteddfod was to be held in a large tent, and, though announced to commence at ten, it was eleven before there was any sign at all of a commencement, and this sign consisted of a number of people flocking to the entrance, with fiercely earnest faces, as if something very dreadful had happened, and crowding through the doorway faster than John Jones could collect the tickets. This made him very angry, and gave rise to much gesticulation. The mania for immediate entrance had not seized all intending visitors. Some were loitering still. There was William Griffiths, a grim-looking farmer, perfectly oblivious of time, talking to Griffith Williams, who was oblivious also.

"Ar 'ou going to try with 'oo harp, man?" asked Griffith Williams.

"No, indeed, not I. I was try last year, but there is William Jones, he is to be one of the judges this time."

"Ay, ay, indeed now it is great pity he was be made a judge of. Yes, indeed," responded Griffith Williams.

That William Jones was to be one of the judges, would be held, by any one who knew the facts of the case, a good and sufficient reason for William Griffiths not to compete for a prize; and if you were to ask William Griffiths why, he would tell you, "For you to understand, it was but small matter, but William Jones was keep horses, 'ou see, and one of the horses was kick very bad, and he was kick the groom, and killed him. So that for you to understand, there was to be an inquest upon him, and I was on the jury. And we was all asking questions, according to the rule; and for you to understand, I did ask if the horse was ever kick before. And so he say it was a very unneighbourly question to ask, and ever since he was bear me ill-will, shocken bad, yes indeed."

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Under these circumstances there was a danger of William Jones being hypercritical, notwithstanding the question that William Griffiths asked was such a fair one; but William Griffiths might have added that "William Jones was like the question so little that he spit in my face and abused me shocken the very next time he did meet me." This William Griffiths thought was to be regretted, for the prize was ten guineas, and he should have been under other circumstances sure to win it, "and times was very bad now, yes indeed to goodness, shocken bad."

At half-past eleven, it occurred to the conductors of the Eisteddfod that it was about time to commence. Accordingly, the chief bards opened their Gorsedd within a magic circle of stones, arranged as ordered by the Druid priests, and when the proclamation had been read, the Arch-Druid expressed his willingness to confer bardic titles upon qualified candidates, who had excelled in contests for pre-eminence in prose, poetry, or song. But it appears that the people, for the most part, save the chief bards the trouble of conferring titles now. They think themselves quite competent to judge of their own excellence, and so take a title to their fancy. When the ceremony of the Gorsedd was over, the president was escorted to the Eisteddfod, and installed in his seat, amid the blowing of trumpets and the sound of the harp. After this an address was read to him, recounting his virtues. This president was the M.P. for the county, a very bad speaker, but very rich, and equally gracious; diligent to create the impression that he enjoyed the meeting and did not at all consider himself bored. He commenced his reply by complimenting everybody, and ended by showering adulation on the Welsh as a people, which, being precisely what a Welshman above all things likes, was received with many cries of "Clywch!" an exclamation that may be interpreted "Hear." After this the president called upon the United Dyffryn and Llanllwch choirs to lead off in a competition for a prize for singing a Welsh glee, entitled "Chiw Feibion Dewrion Dirwest." By some means the choir had become disunited, and while a gentleman went to gather it, the company had ample time to look about them.

The tent was capacious, and in it were gathered between two and three thousand people. Among them were the bards Creuddynfab, Myfyr Mon, Yuysgainganol, Cynddelw, Nefydd, and a host of other grim Druids. The younger of the people looked plump and merry, but the elders were very sombre, and most of the men had those large cheek-bones which Mr. Busby said were occasioned by the hard work of speaking the language. Mr. Busby would have been more confirmed in his opinion had he been made acquainted with the fact spoken to by some ministers of the land, that they would rather preach five sermons in English than one in Welsh, so tiring is that tongue. The platform was a very large one, and it was ornamented by the mottoes, "Y gwir yn erbyn y byd," which means, "Truth against the world;" and "Cymru dros byth:" "Wales for ever;" and in its midst was an empty chair fantastically adorned with garlands. It was the ambition of many to sit therein, but

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it was reserved for the winner of "the chair prize"—a literary feat of the first magnitude, attempted only by the most accomplished bards. Round about on this platform were arranged some fifty or sixty seats, reserved for those who liked to pay for them. Among these extravagant people were Busby and Stainley, the former sitting between Mrs. Davies and her daughter Ruth, the latter on the other side of Mrs. Davies, making believe that he was as comfortable as if he were next the comely Ruth.

Mrs. Davies, of Llanllwch Fawr, was an unmistakeably comfortable old lady and an admirable specimen of the commendable Welshwoman. Her face was round, plump, and peacefully expressionless and unconcerned about everything. Ruth was a more delicate copy of her mother; and as she had received a thorough English education, and been duly "finished," she shone well among the less well to do ladies of Llanrhyddiog.

To say that Miss Ruth was educated in England is to hint at the existence of a feeling among the Welsh not generally admitted by them. They venerate their old language, but they undoubtedly respect English; so much so that some take a pride in not being able to speak Welsh, and some are taunted that it is pride, and not ignorance, that prevents them from using it. A Welshman will not go so far as to admit that it is a thing to be proud of, the not understanding of Welsh. On the contrary, he argues against it, but at the same time he has an inward feeling that the Anglo-Welshman has the advantage of him, is more respectable and will make his business pay better. Thus it is that shrewder Welshmen give their children an English education, and care little whether they learn Welsh or not; and to make up for it, deliver enthusiastic speeches on the gloriously poetic language that is going to last until the hoary-headed hills amongst which its sound is heard are bowed to a level with the plain,—which, in plain language, of course means—for ever.

Just the same feeling that induces this unadmitted respect in the Welsh for England, induces them also, on the occasion of their grand Eisteddfod, to hover round any foreigner who may have travelled into Wales in search of the honour that he lacked at home. They do not confine their admiration solely to hopeless literary men; but any blighted musician whom society will not appreciate, or any scientific discoverer of commonplaces whom learned societies refrain from commending, will be permitted to read any number of papers, or perform any number of airs, in reason, at the assembly of the bards of Cymru.

This year they had secured an entirely new lion—a perfect novelty, in the person of Augustus Laurie, who, with his little body sitting on a chair, and with one of his little legs cocked on another chair, as he pulled his long brown whiskers, said, in his off-hand, smiling way, that he was commissioned by Government to inspect the salmon-fisheries, under the new Act of Parliament. This was the only account the dapper little man gave of himself; and no one knew any more of him, beyond a whisper that he was related to "the great Lauries of Scotland," whoever

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they might be. None knew exactly how he came to be famous in their midst, except Mr. Jones, the school-master—a man of unquestionable respectability—to whom he had introduced himself, and who had been at much trouble to introduce him to the rich coal and iron masters. Thus it was that all at once Mr. Laurie became famous, while the poor innocent school-master looked on amazed, and wondered how he could have had the audacity to entertain so distinguished a gentleman. But at the same time he felt rather hurt when Mr. Laurie went out of his way, at that very Eisteddfod, to snub him. The name of Augustus Laurie was often on the lips of Ruth, as it was upon the lips of all the other ladies of Llanrhyddiog. This made Ben Busby rather jealous, and Mr. Stainley desired "to see this fellow Laurie." He had every opportunity of seeing him to the very best advantage on this occasion, as he strutted about the platform, with an opera-glass slung across his shoulder (a most effective thing, strongly resembling a genuine quiver of Cupid's darts), never in one place long; now leaning over the back of a chair containing 50,000*l.*, engaged in a smiling conversation; then passing across the platform, giving a nod to a couple of thousand, and a "how d'e do" to a five thousand, in order to spend quite five minutes in flattering discourse with mamma who most jealously guarded a pensive eighty thousand; and all this to the amazement and envy of some half a dozen local wallflowers, who would have been ready to give ten years of their lives for such coolness. But then he was connected with the great Lauries of Scotland, and had been commissioned by Government to look after the salmon-fisheries. So Mr. Laurie had picnics in abundance arranged for him, and what time he did not spend in visiting was occupied in the billiard-room, where he sometimes lost, but more frequently won. But what the salmon were doing all this time, Mr. Laurie seemed neither to know nor care.

What, too, were the United Dyffryn and Llanllwch choirs doing? The gentleman who had been to assemble them now returned perfectly unsuccessful: he suggested the omission of their piece, until they could be reunited. Next in the programme was a prize for the best "englyn" on a recently departed bard. An "englyn" is a piece of metrical composition consisting of four lines, the vowels and consonants in which are, in certain places, similar, so that the alliteration is very pleasing to the ear of a native. This prize was competed for by several odd-looking men, who, from their rough appearance, seemed little capable of even aspiring to versification, much less poetry; but the judge thought they were genuine poets, so the matter must be settled for ever thus. The prize was won by a rising bard, who had assumed the name of Gwynedd, pronounced, as nearly as I can convey it, Goouneth. The adjudicator was an old and eminent bard, nominated by the projector of the Eisteddfod, learned in Druidic lore, and one who devoted most of his time to writing "englynion" (which, be it known, is the plural of the word "englyn") in honour of his people and the works of his forefathers. Busby was moved to ask this old gentleman for a translation of the "englyn" that seemed to create so

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much delight among the audience, but the venerable bard assured him it could not be done.

"No, indeed; you have no words in your language to hold the meaning of our Welsh. I never saw a good translation myself. No, indeed."

But it never occurred to the old gentleman that he did not know enough of any other language to enable him to judge. On this being suggested to him, he said—

"Well, indeed, I was not toking of any other language. I was toking of Welsh, 'ou see, and 'ou can't translate Welsh whatever."

This was conclusive.

Our friends continued their promenade in accordance with the fashion, and now and then Mr. Stainley stood up in a prominent place, taking views with his eye-glass. He asked innumerable questions in English, and received the fullest information in Welsh, with which he seemed perfectly satisfied. In the meantime the Eisteddfod progressed, now with a long dry speech, and then with a short witty one. At one time there was performing the choir of a little country church of the neighbourhood, composed all of old men, apparently farmers, most of them with bandy legs, dressed in corduroy breeches and drab gaiters; and almost all wore large-rimmed spectacles. They had very powerful gruff voices, and sang with great care, following the notes most attentively. They did not gain a prize, but they certainly deserved one for their great perseverance. Then came the reading of a successful essay, by the bard Glan Pedr, upon some historical subject. From its contents one would have thought that it gained the prize by reason of the essayist having at his command a greater number of adulatory adjectives in praise of the Welsh people than any other of the competitors. This opinion was expressed indeed by derisive Mr. Busby, and thereupon followed a conversation among the bystanders.

Professor Jones, who for a Welshman seemed to be strangely truthful as to the merits and demerits of his countrymen, said that it was customary to deal in fulsome flattery at Eisteddfodau (which is the plural of Eisteddfod), and continued to discourse on the general question; his argument being, that if the Welsh people continued trusting to the speeches of bards in adoration of the deeds of their forefathers and the glories of their country, they would never rise from their present obscurity, and Englishmen would continue to fill the most important posts in their towns. What he advised was the utilization of the machinery in connection with Eisteddfodau. It might well form the basis of a Social Science Congress, or something of the kind, which would be of true benefit to the people; and, if deemed necessary, their meetings might still be conducted after the ancient Druidic fashion: for the fact is, the Cymry are very proud of the mustiness of the Eisteddfod. They say it sprang from the original assembly of the chiefs and rulers of ancient Britain, before the Saxon Wittenagemote came into existence.

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While the professor was thus learnedly discoursing on the institution, general attention was being diverted to a competition in pennillion singing, which seemed to be the most interesting performance of the day. Pennillion singing is improvised, and is carried on by the two competing bards chanting repartee, accompanied by the harp. When well done, the witty bards keep the assembled Cymry in ecstasies of delight. Following upon this was another interesting performance by a little girl of four years of age, dressed in full Welsh costume, including the tall hat and the bright red shawl. She sang an old Welsh air, to a harp accompaniment by the bard "Pencerdd Gwalia"—"the chief minstrel of Wales." The multitude of faces seemed lit up with pleasure, eagerly listening to the lisping voice, and supplying, by their imaginations, the missing notes, as the pretty little old-fashioned child laboured on, keeping the very best of time.

Following this came a patriotic speech by a noted preacher of the period, who spoke with such zest and spirit upon the motto, "Cymru Cymro a Chymraeg"—which means, "Wales, Welshmen, and the Welsh Language"—that his hearers were gradually led on to wild excitement, and rose in a body shouting, "Clywch! clywch!" and clapping their hands, so that really one would believe without doubt that there never was such a place as Wales, and never would be such another. It was just before the conclusion of this speech that Mr. Gulpin made his appearance, and greeted Mr. Stainley with as broad a grin as had ever rested on his face before.

"Ain't it a farce—oh, my!" was all Mr. Gulpin could say, and chucking up his chin derisively was all Mr. Gulpin could do. Still he must needs come, because he liked to look on and wonder, be disgusted, and express his disgust. He had not been in the place long, however, before he espied Mr. Laurie deeply engaged with the mother of 80,000*l.*

"Hold hard!" said Mr. Gulpin, and he ducked and dived, and veered round this way and that to get a good view of Mr. Laurie. Being satisfied, he repeated, "Hold hard!" again, walked across the platform towards Mr. Laurie, politely waited for a pause in the conversation, tapped him on the shoulder, and, making all kinds of grimaces, remarked—

"Bilks, my boy, I hardly knowed you with them swell clothes on."

Mr. Laurie seemed to turn all kinds of colours at once, and Mr. Gulpin looked on with ogreish delight, as his victim edged his way off the platform, through the crowd, and out of the door. Recovering his surprise at the door, Mr. Laurie offered an objection to Mr. Gulpin's proceedings, suggesting that he must have been mistaken, and appealed to a respectable tradesman of the town as to whether he was not staying with the first family in Llanrhyddiog, and was not the Government Inspector of salmon-fisheries?

Mr. Gulpin derided the supposition. "Government Inspector, eh! Oh, no, you ain't. Government inspected you are. Don't you go belying your profession. You're a billiard marker, not to say billiard sharper, and at the present moment you're wanted."

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So Mr. Bilks had to "come along," and that was the end of the wonderful Laurie, the lion of the day. The dapper little man had been so courted that it would have been next to impossible for him to have resisted the temptation he fell into, and his dupes were not slow to discover that he must have been an exceedingly clever fellow to have so deceived *them*.

The next day and the next there was more Eisteddfod, with fresh honourable chairmen, and more speech-making, more englynion and pennillion, and more chorus. The same audience with the same enthusiasm. The same tent, with the same mottoes. The same nobility on the platform, with Mr. Stainley as a substitute for Mr. Laurie. The professor as discursive and urbane as ever. More flattery being dispensed, and the same capacity exhibited for swallowing it. And then when the bustle and excitement of the great gathering were over, Llanrhyddiog went to sleep again in its own accustomed fashion, in which people seemed to get up only that they might eat, and ate only that they might sleep, work being indulged in simply that the time might not hang heavily on their hands. This monotony, to any but the natives, would have been unbearable for any length of time; for Sunday was the only day that seemed to come once a week, the others were all so very much alike.

On the first of these Sundays that intervened to break the monotony, Mrs. Davies and her household went to the chapel. Mr. Busby and Mr. Stainley accompanied her, and found the chapel to be a queer little place, very small and very plain, with four candlesticks suspended from the ceiling, and two or three hanging on the wall; these latter being made of tin, and polished so as to act as reflectors. There was an ordinary fire-place at the end of the chapel, the pews were of the commonest description, and round the pulpit was the large square enclosure which in the stricter churches of the Wesleyans is set apart for the elders.

The preacher was a shoemaker of the name of Evans, and he had journeyed ten miles that morning, to conduct the service. He commenced by giving out a hymn in Welsh. Contrary to the custom generally adopted in churches and chapels in England, the congregation did not rise in a body at the sounding of the first note of the hymn; indeed, scarcely more than three people had risen from their seats by the time the first line had been chanted by the leader. But slowly, one by one, the people rose, until perhaps three-fourths of their number were standing, and singing lustily. There seemed to be the same wild, absent look about the features of each, comparing well with the wild weird notes of the song that they sung. There seemed to be the same listlessness, too, in their manner; for those of the men who stood, lolled on the back of their pews, with their hands in their pockets, some turning this way, and some that, now singing, now silent. Near to the end of the hymn the voices seemed to flag, and the sound died almost to the volume of but one voice; when from one corner of the chapel lustily swelled the first note of the tune. This voice was soon joined by the whole of the singers, and so the verse

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was repeated; dying gradually, the sound was caught up again in another part of the chapel, and the same process was repeated—falling and rising, dying and reviving for some four or five times, when the spirit seemed to move none to re-awaken the sound, and so the hymn ended. This is one of the characteristics of the native Welsh singing, and it has a very strange and moving effect. The tunes are mostly in the minor key, and the wailing notes of the singers seem like the last cries of a dying language.

On the completion of the hymn, the preacher commenced a prayer in a scarcely audible voice, but, by-and-by, it grew louder, and occasionally the people showed their appreciation of the aspirations of the preacher by a repetition of "Amen," "Ay, ay," and "Deolch," which last may be translated "Gloria Deo."

As the service advanced, and when the preaching commenced, these comments increased; and, as is customary in such places, some members of the congregation arose—others walked out of their seats and leaned over the back of another pew. One old man, with red hair, and with a very large magenta-coloured woollen wrapper tied round his neck with a bow, placed himself in all kinds of positions, now and then repeating his comments with much fervour. As the preacher grew warm in his discourse, and chanted his exhortations of many sentences commencing with the same syllables, and ending with a kind of wail—which among the people is called "the hwyl"—some even wept, and many seemed moved. Busby felt a kind of thrill at the extraordinary tone of the preacher and the earnest looks of the people; and even Mr. Stainley "felt a little out of the common." Indeed there was only one thing that marred the touching nature of the service, and that was the immense amount of expectoration that was going forward all over the chapel. Even the minister, while preaching, was not careful to refrain from indulging in a habit that seemed to be so generally prevalent.

The service was concluded by another hymn, and it was long before it was ended, for the preaching had moved the people to praise. The influence of the whole was strangely affecting, as all such services are, even to those not understanding the tongue. And thus it can be well understood why the people cling so tenaciously to their language, for though the cold Saesoneg may do well enough for their business, their emotions can find a voice only in their loved Chymraeg.

With this experience of Llanrhyddiog, Messieurs Busby and Stainley wisely made an end of their visit.

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Eveleen O'Connor.

It was during a little tour that I made in Ireland when following in the wake of her Majesty Queen Victoria, in her first progress through that most famous island, that I one day found myself standing in a rather disconsolate state at the large window of a very dreary inn, in a dull remote country town. Except the thickness of the dust that lay on the table there was no object in the room to engage attention or curiosity, but while I stood wearily looking out of the window I beheld one that instantly excited both. It was the figure of a woman, far removed from the bloom of youth, but still by no means old, who stood just before it in an attitude one might imagine designed for effect, but with an expression of face that art could scarcely assume.

Her arms were crossed over the breast in such a way as to bring each hand to rest on the opposite shoulder; they were not the ruddy hands of a country damsel, but pale, thin, almost bloodless in aspect. A mantle that had once been scarlet hung loosely round a tall wasted figure: the face was quite colourless, and seemed immovable as marble, but the large dark eyes were full of the most singular and melancholy light; they were upturned to the window, and fastened on me with a fixed and sorrowful gaze.

In answer to what I supposed to be a silent supplication, I threw a sixpence into the street; it fell at the woman's feet, but she never noticed it, nor withdrew the mournful eyes from my face; their silently beseeching expression was unaltered; while standing thus she burst into a strain of song of the strangest and wildest description. No words were distinguishable; it was a wild and plaintive melody that seemed to flow from the soul of sorrow.

Before it ceased the man denominated waiter came into the room.

"Who is she" I asked.

"A poor creature every one is good to. God help her."

"I threw down a sixpence, but she did not notice it."

"Nor won't. She only takes food."

"Indeed! pray then bring her in, and give her this," nodding my head to the luncheon I could not eat.

He brought her into the room. She held out a poor checked apron, and received the food in silence; looking at me she made the sign of the cross on her breast, and went away without uttering a word.

"Is she mad?" was my inquiry.

"She is not right in herself," the waiter replied, slightly correcting my expression.

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"Has she no friends?"

"Every one is friends to her, poor girl."

"But no relatives, no one to take care of her?"

"Ah! sure God takes care of her, when He took away the creature's reason. She comes from the other side of the mountain, and they say she comes of decent people—great people entirely they were in the old times, before Henry II. or Cromwell came over here. But her father's people got into trouble ten or fifteen years ago, about a boy that was killed up there by the side of the mountain. There was an old man that used to go about with her in my time, that is, five years ago come Candlemas, when I came to this place, and they said he was her father. He was a pilgrim, and only took food or a night's lodging. He had 'made his soul,' good man, whatever had gone again him, and one day he was found lying dead under a hedge, and she, poor innocent, sitting beside him, not crying nor screeching, but just as quiet as if she were watching an infant asleep in its cradle."

"How very odd."

"True for you, ma'am. But if you please, the car is waiting, and it's myself forgot to tell you."

I forthwith mounted the said car, and holding on as well as I could, contrived to reach the house where I was to be a visitor, and where, having described the apparition that had interested me so much at the inn, I was told the history I now record.

Eveleen O'Connor was the daughter of a farmer who in England might be said to be well to do in the world, but who in Ireland derived more importance among his neighbours from the honours of his traditionary ancestry than from the number of acres he was able to farm.

Brian O'Connor, on the authority of his family tradition, and in the pedantic language of the hedge-schoolmaster, could boast of being descended in a direct and mathematically straight line from the ancient kings of Ireland; his claim was considered too clear to be disputed; he was an O'Connor, and, therefore, a descendant of the famous Roderick O'Connor, who, in Brian's most eloquent phraseology, "was the renowned and unfortunate king of a renowned and unfortunate land." His hereditary pride was, however, chiefly displayed in the harmless garrulity of a good-hearted old man: in his only son, who, after their illustrious ancestor, was named Roderick, though always called Rory, pride assumed a darker character, because it was allied to a disagreeable and even repulsive disposition—a character scarcely comprehensible to the plain and plodding English farmer who might possess ten times his wealth.

Brian was a widower; he had remained so from the time when his youngest child—a girl some years younger than her brother—had been born. The neighbours said "he doted down on Eveleen, who took more after him than dark Rory did, and hadn't one bit more pride nor stiffness than if she had come of nobody and wasn't to have a fortune;" for Eveleen

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grew up to be eighteen years of age, and was gay, handsome, happy, and wilful.

His sister's demeanour was often a sore grievance to Rory; she shrank from his dark looks when he reproved her, and if she saw he was really angry; but when she could venture to do so she tossed her handsome head defiantly, laughed at his vexation, and repeated the conduct that gave him displeasure, winning her own way or taking it, and showing no more conceit or haughtiness at wake or wedding, rustic dance or evening walk, than any country beauty might do independently of pride of pedigree or portion.

Eveleen O'Connor was the natural product of her country; open-hearted, impulsive, and thoughtless; entering heartily into all present enjoyment with utter recklessness of future consequences, yet full also of deep passionate feeling, and keenly sensitive to what others thought of her. She was believed to have had a first-rate education; she could read, sprig muslin, and it was said she could write; it was a fact that she had worked something like a dog in worsteds, which was framed and hung up in the parlour, or "room," as that seldom-used apartment of an Irish farmhouse is commonly called; and which, in addition to that ornament, boasted a boarded floor and a mahogany table, while the deep window-seat held the whole family library, consisting of four smoke-browned volumes of a fabulous history of Ireland in days, I believe, before the Flood, and having the pages relating to King Roderick much worn by frequent and very laborious perusal.

One Sunday dark Rory came into dinner with a countenance still darker than usual: the thunder-cloud soon burst. He was furious at having heard that his sister had been again seen walking with Jem Delaney: "a fellow she ought to scorn to look at the same side of the way with, and whom she had so often been warned to drop."

Eveleen did not now toss her head, or laugh, or scoff at her brother's queer notions. She coloured, and then grew pale; shrank from his angry and searching gaze, and looked to her father as if for help. The timid old man, always anxious to conciliate the exasperated pair, began a sort of exhortation with the words—

"There now, alanna, have done, will ye? it can't be helped now. You won't be after doing so again, Eveleen, astore; don't now, agra."

"You won't go for to side with Rory against me, father dear?" cried the girl in a voice of supplication that came from the heart. Its tone was enough for Rory; he threw back his chair, and, stopping for a moment before he left the room, he swore a deep and deliberate oath to be the death of Delaney if ever his sister demeaned herself by thinking of him.

Eveleen knew well what thinking of him meant; she knew she was thinking of him just in the way her brother wanted her not to think; the dish she held fell from her hands on the floor, and he, looking at her white face, added as an additional warning, a fresh asseveration to his horrid vow, and set off to the next market town, where he intended to

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stay that night. An hour or so afterwards Eveleen walked out to a hazel grove near the house, leaving her father asleep in his large chair. It was a shady, pleasant place; the boughs formed a canopy over tangled brushwood, wild-flowers, and short shiny grass. There the young folks of the neighbourhood often met; but the hour was too early for such meetings, and the girl's heart was too heavy for their mirth.

For the first time in her young life the heart of Eveleen O'Connor was heavy; full to oppression with an undefined sadness: the shadow of a coming sorrow was upon her. She raised her arm to pull down a branch of hazel nuts, unconscious that she did so, for she was thinking of something quite unlike nut-gathering: yet still she tried and tried again to lower the bough that was too strong for her. An arm was stretched over her head; the bough was swept down almost to the ground. Her head was then turned, and her black tearful eyes fell before the bright and honest ones that laughingly met them.

Tears in those of the gay and admired Eveleen no one remembered to have seen; and the answer—"Not much, Jem"—made to Delaney's anxious inquiry as to what had happened, did not satisfy the inquirer. The truth was soon found out, and the cause of the unusual tears discovered. Thus, as a few words often lead to a great many, the three already quoted led finally to a declaration from Jem Delaney that Eveleen O'Connor might indeed get a richer husband, but none that could love her better; and these words, again, led to the declaration on her part that she would take no other husband than poor Jem.

Eveleen's love was not misplaced, barring—as the Irish say—the fact that it was contrary to the wishes of the family; but her brother had no right to oppose it, and her father was only guided by him. Delaney was a young man of whom every one spoke well; every one but Rory O'Connor would say he was a clever, proper boy, which meant a well-grown, handsome unmarried man. He was true-hearted, intelligent, and good. All the objections even Rory could entertain against him were three—he was come of nobody, he had no money, yet he was a greater favourite than the descendant of the kings of Ireland, and the heir of a little sum of money in the county bank.

Neither Eveleen nor her lover were much given to consideration or exhortation; caution and reserve are not Irish qualities, and certainly appear very disagreeably in an Irish character. Our story might have been a different one, or rather might not have had an existence, if they had formed any part of those of the young couple who passionately and hastily arranged their destiny beneath the shadow of the hazel grove.

Not many hours afterwards Eveleen was some miles distant from her home; they were both in Sunday dress, and quite ready for the priest, who was the bridegroom's relation, to make them one for life.

If there are no people who more naturally act on what is termed the impulse of the moment, there are also none who, in general, more keenly and deeply suffer the penalty that often arises from allowing feeling to

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conquer judgment. Eveleen O'Connor was possessed of all the keen, passionate, yet variable feelings of her country. No sooner was the step taken which her brother had so terribly denounced, than a dread of its results to him she so truly loved seized upon her heart, and caused her to implore him not to return home with her as they had originally agreed should be the case. The loving bridegroom readily yielded to such a solicitation, and instead of taking her back as soon as the ceremony was performed, and asking forgiveness for a run-away marriage, he brought the trembling bride to an old house on the hill side, of which he kept the key, while the owners, who sometimes worked with him, were on what is called "the tramp."

It was a miserable sort of place in which to celebrate the wedding of a young, handsome, and hitherto happy couple. But love was there, and the gloom of inward fear or outward wretchedness was brightened when Eveleen looked on the happy, joyfully smiling husband, who built up a pile of turf on the wide, grateless hearth, placed her in an old chair beside it, and declared himself to be as happy as a king.

"It is a poor place to bring you to, mavourneen," he said, "but sure with the morning's light we will be off, and it's myself will be proud to take you back in honour and happiness to the people that owned you."

Eveleen shivered—not at the thought of remaining, but of going: to stay in that poor house with Jem Delaney was all she wished: all the rest of the world might be a blank; within those four clay walls was all to which her heart clung now in its wild and passionate devotion; and she shivered, not at the thought of remaining days, months, years with him in such an abode as that, but at the prospect of leaving it to expose him to her brother's fury. Still, when she met his beaming eyes, and looked at his honest face, she smiled, and got over her fears and helped him to spread on the bare table the provisions he had carefully brought, and they made their marriage feast by the light of the blazing turf, and tasted, it may be believed, all the sweetness that a dinner of herbs, where love is, can be supposed to yield.

The morning's light, however, did not find them at all more ready to take their departure. Eveleen trembled even more at the prospect of meeting Rory O'Connor, and used that tender yet impassioned persuasiveness which Irishwomen can employ, as well, at least, as any others, to induce her husband to remain where he was. The light of her eyes, the pulse of her heart, and whatever else Jem Delaney was to her, did not, indeed, require so much tender entreaty. He really did not feel in any haste to encounter "dark Rory," but still, when he laid her head on his breast and soothed her like a child, he would say, "Hush, mavourneen astore, hush! and never fear that any one can harm us now. No, ma colleen, you are my own now; and since I have you safe Rory may keep the money, and leave me all I wanted, and that's your own self, acushla machree."

Yet the wedded lovers stayed all that day in the old house. The rain

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fell, and Eveleen was glad to see it: the wind swept down the hill, and she started and trembled each time it shook the crazy door. Jem Delaney piled the turf on the hearth, drew out the white ashes and told their fortunes in them. Evening was drawing on; the day had been dark and dreary, and the light without the house was fading away: the blaze of the turf danced in the small window-pane, the young couple forgot their care, smiling at each other, while the husband, with a piece of old iron drawing out the turf ashes on the hearth, told the most wonderful fortunes he could invent for himself, his wife, and perhaps for a generation yet to come. Eveleen had nearly upset the rickety stool he sat on by a vigorous push, intended to interrupt the flow of his predictions, when she grasped the arm she had pushed away, with the utterance of the Irish word, "Whist!" All her warm young blood left the glowing cheek, and ran curdling to the heart. A heavy trampling step was heard coming quickly on before the lonely house: a shadow fell over them as a figure passed the lighted-up window: a hasty blow drove in the half-shattered door.

Delaney threw himself before his bride, believing the object was to take her from him. He cried out, "She is my wife! we were married!"

They were the last words he ever spoke; a shot fired by his wife's brother laid him dead at her feet. Rory O'Connor dropped the musket from his hand, lifted up the girl, who lay almost as lifeless on the bleeding body of her husband of a day, and, carrying her out, placed her on the car that waited for them and brought her back to her father's house.

The circumstances we relate are not so strange in reality as they appear when read in a story: many a wilder one, however, has often been known in the country of poor Eveleen O'Connor.

With the recklessness so often remarkable in persons who have just forfeited their lives to the law, dark Rory not only returned to his home after this deliberate murder, but, apparently satisfied with the vengeance he had taken, was insensible to the penalty he had incurred. It was only when he was warned that the "polis were out" that he began to think about it, and he was taken prisoner before he attempted flight.

At the inquest on the unfortunate Jem Delaney, his wife's brother was charged with the murder. The prisoner maintained the same surly, repulsive pride and stubbornness that had earned for him the appellation of "dark."

This apparent indifference only at one moment gave way. At that moment his dark eyes flashed a vivid light; he clenched his hands; his limbs shook, not with fear, but with passion. His sister, the wretched young widow, a wife for less than twenty-four hours, was brought in as a witness. That she would be an incompetent one was almost evident. She was deadly pale, with the exception of one deep red spot high up on one cheek, that burned as if with hectic fever. At the first question put to her, the large, dark, and once saucy eyes that had stolen poor Jem Delaney's heart away, wandered, with a helpless, pitiable expression, from face to

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face, till they rested for a second on that of the prisoner, when a shiver shook her whole frame, but her lips were silent.

Seeing her state both of bodily and mental illness, it was resolved to put to her only one leading and decisive question. So they said—"You were at Ballymack on the evening of the murder. Who fired the shot that killed James Delaney?"

"Who killed James Delaney?" said the unhappy girl, as if repeating the words to herself. "Who killed James Delaney?" she reiterated more slowly, and looking round to the coroner and jury, and all before her, as if making the inquiry herself; then bringing round those wandering eyes to the prisoner scowling at her, she repeated them once more, and stretching out her arms towards him, she cried with an exceeding bitter cry, "Who? Oh! Rory, Rory—you killed James Delaney!" She dropped down while that cry yet made the ears that heard it to tingle, and, unconscious of what she had done, she was carried back to her father's house.

And there she lay, and knew nothing more. The words she had repeated seemed to have set fire to her brain; and yet, while she lay raving on her bed, her ravings were not of the frightful scenes in which she had lately been. No; as the prisoner in his horrid dungeon might recall the vision of green fields, and flowing streams, and freshening breezes, so her mind wandered back to careless, happy times, and her rambling talk was either of her childhood's happy hours, or of the days of her maturer vanity, of new dresses and slighted lovers, of dances and merriment, and all that was farthest removed from the fearful reality of the present time.

Persons who know what it is to have gone through the delirium of fever, induced by some mental shock or violent agitation, may recollect, as the writer of this story does, the peculiar sensation of gradually awakening, as it were, to the recovered power of perception, to a feeble sense of existence, when the mind only seemed to be slowly awakening, and the pains or languor of the body were as yet unfelt. Such a state might almost appear to resemble what we may fancy an arising from the dead to be. There is a faint stirring again to life, a wondering, an oblivion of what we are, or where we are.

It was the evening hour, and the season was the end of autumn, when Eveleen lay in that state of semi-consciousness. All was deep quietness; the mournful song of the robin, "The last lone songster of the fading year," perched on the topmost bough of the brown-leafed tree outside her window, was the only sound that broke the stillness, and its song was in unison with the gathering twilight and melancholy stillness of the house.

The girl, who had not yet lived for nineteen years, had suffered long and fearfully; she lay scarcely restored to reason, and incapable of exerting its powers. Her long black hair hung neglected over the bed; the once bright eyes were only partly open; but gradually they moved

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inquiringly around the room, till they rested on the figure of her father. The old man sat on the family "chest," once an invariable article in an Irish farmer's house, containing the family wardrobes of, perhaps, two or three generations. On the chest from which his favourite child used to array herself in holiday finery, Brian O'Connor sat sunk in gloom. His once easy, good-natured face was marked with lines of care and grief; the long frieze coat hung loose from his shoulders, his hand was plunged within the open waistcoat, and his grey hair hung down on the breast over which his head was bowed. He was changed, much changed, poor man! All trouble seems sometimes to fall at once on those who have known little or nothing of it. Brian had rarely known trouble, except when some refractory pedagogue disputed the mathematical accuracy of his line of descent from what he called "the ancient ould kings of Ireland, who were the greatest kings that ever sat on a throne;" nor had a care ever marked a line on his brow, except when, after a long argument on the point, he felt unable to convince an antagonist that the Irish sceptre must one day revert to that ancient line, and Dublin Castle be once more the palace of the O'Connor race, as it had been before Henry II. brought over his Saxons to ruin the land.

Poor Brian was not now perplexing himself with any historical difficulties or speculations. He was changed, good man! a short time had wrought the change of years. His hair was grey, his figure bent, his eyes dull and glassy. Eveleen looked at him, and tried to recall some recollection of the past—to recollect how she had come to be as she was—and why her father sat thus miserably in her sick room. This she did feebly, and for a moment remained silent. He raised his eyes and met hers. Then she said, "Father!"

It was the first rational word she had uttered. At another moment it would have thrilled his heart with joy, for he was a tender father, and it is sweet, when the voice that was as music to our ear has been only heard to utter the incoherent ravings of delirium, to catch the first soft whisper of affection, to hear even the simplest word that indicates returning reason. But if pity for his child was then in poor Brian's breast, there was also grief and shame—corroding grief, and bitter burning shame, which she had caused; and they were not more lightly borne because brought upon him by one who had been the pride of his heart. No hand can wound deeply save that of one we love: no reproach fester in the heart like that of a friend.

Eveleen repeated the word "Father!"

"Oh, then, you miserable girl, is it coming to your senses you are, this day of all the days in the year? and wouldn't it be well for you if you had lost them entirely; and well for me and for those that are gone if you never had had them. And is it coming to yourself you are this day, of all the days in the year, when you have brought your only brother to the gallows? Oh, that ever I was born, or lived to see this day!"

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Thus he ran on, never looking to see the effect his words were taking on the still unrecovered girl.

Eveleen was now sitting up erect in her bed, staring at him with wild and wide open eyes. He had kept alone in his sorrow and disgrace, and it was a relief to pour out some part of the grief that devoured him. He broke into a long passionate cry, covered his face with his hands, swaying his figure back and forward in the energy of his anguish.

"Oh, Rory! my son Rory! you that were my pride, and should have come after me! did I ever think I'd see the dark day when you'd die on the gallows—when your own sister would take your life on account of her low-born lover? Oh, Jem Delaney! Jem Delaney! what have you brought on us all this day! Rory's life has gone for having taken yours. You are dead, and Rory's dead; and she that brought it on us all is lying there."

He might have gone on longer; Eveleen seemed altogether changed. She no longer stared wildly at him, she looked quite calm. Her aspect alarmed him when he did remark it. He spoke to her at first gently, then affectionately, entreatingly, imploringly: she looked in his face with a sort of tender sadness, but she seemed to search for something she could not see, and only asked about it by a look that pierced his heart. She never uttered a word. Worlds, if they had been in his possession, might Brian have given to hear again that one word—Father—so faintly uttered, so unregarded when it was heard.

It was never spoken again: from that moment Eveleen spoke no more. The frightful images he had brought before her mind had a rather singular effect on a scarcely settled brain: from that hour she remained just as she was when I saw her at the country inn: not mad, but, as the waiter said, "not right in herself." Perfectly harmless, gentle, quiet, submissive, and silent. The only way her voice was ever heard was in singing a wild Irish air, something like the more plaintive tones of the Irish cry when heard at a distance. She assiduously attended her father, seemed to understand his looks better than his words; sat with dark melancholy eyes fastened on his care-worn face, and would rise and get what he wanted without his asking for it. She followed all his movements; got up when he rose, sat down when he sat, and went after him when he went out—like some pet animal following its owner. The poor father felt his punishment was heavier than he could bear. He thought he must be a sinner above all sinners because he suffered such things. In his prosperity he thought he had few sins on his conscience: he attended to his religion, paid the priest all his dues, was good to the poor, and did wrong to no one. Now, in his adversity, he was of those who write bitter things against themselves. He gave up all for lost; did nothing; let his farm go to ruin; and sought to atone by humility for the pride that had yielded to him such deadly fruit. After many penances, he at last made a vow of voluntary poverty; gave the small store of money that remained to him for religious and charitable uses, and, attended by his unhappy child, went

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forth literally to be a pilgrim and stranger on this earth, wishing only to arrive at the city where the inhabitants go no more out—"the city that hath foundations; whose maker and builder is God."

Poor old man! He may have mistaken the road thither. Some may think he took a roundabout one: certainly he chose one much more hard and thorny than other people take who are much more sure in their own minds of coming in right at last. We know not how that may be. Perhaps by the side of the broken-hearted old man and his smitten child may have walked the Man of Sorrows—the Saviour of all who seek Him: who draweth nigh to them that are of a humble heart, and saveth such as are of a contrite spirit.

The pilgrim wandered with his quiet child, praying for her, perhaps, far more than for himself; receiving food for both and shelter when they wanted them; asking a blessing for the givers; making the sign of the cross, and pursuing his way until his hour came, when, having, as his country people believed, "made his soul," his worn-out body was found as if asleep by the roadside, his daughter seated quietly beside it watching it like a faithful dog, neither crying nor lamenting; but calm as if—as the waiter had said—she were watching an infant sleeping in its cradle.

They took the old pilgrim, whose pilgrimage had ended, and laid him in an ancient burying-ground, to which the ivied ruins of a very old church gave a peculiar sanctity; for that church, they said, had been destroyed by Cromwell, and might, the people believed, have witnessed their own worship in the days of poor Brian O'Connor's ancestor—"the renowned and unfortunate king of a renowned and unfortunate land."

And the once handsome Eveleen, the wilful and gay, remained as I had seen her. She would sit beside the wooden cross that marked her father's grave, and sometimes hang on it a curiously cut paper wreath, or a bunch of wild-flowers; but if she prayed, it was in her secret heart alone, for her lips were ever silent.

Such is the sad story of Eveleen O'Connor, of whom my waiter said, "Sure God takes care of her, when He took away the creature's reason."

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The Miseries of a Dramatic Author.

All professions have their pleasures and their pains; and the artistic temperament, by reason of its excessive sensitiveness, is peculiarly organized for pain. But although long familiarity with the dramatic art has made me conversant with the minor miseries incidental to it, I never thoroughly realized to myself how much more the dramatist had to suffer than poets and novelists, until the other day, when, in a conversation on the delight which an orator must feel in swaying an audience, some one observed:—

"A friend of mine says he can conceive nothing equal to the pleasure of being a dramatic author. He gets the applause *paid down*."

"Whoever said that," I answered, laughing, "was assuredly *not* a dramatist. He spoke from the outside."

"That's true. Still he knows dramatists; and any one can appreciate the value of the applause being instantaneous and concentrated, instead of dribbling in at slow intervals. Moreover, the praise of a novel or a poem is given to the work as a whole; only a few of its details are noticed, and the author generally finds that the critics pass over his best things."

"Yes, yes—we all know that. As a wit once said, the only criticism to satisfy an author is unqualified praise and all extracted!"

"Well, the dramatist has 'all extracted.' Every passage tells; every single good thing gains applause."

"I admit that an author's self-love is more energetically stimulated by the volleying plaudits of a delighted pit, than by the scattered and not over-intelligent praises of critics, or the vague warmth of congratulations from acquaintances. It is one thing to read a column of commonplaces, even when eulogistic, or to hear Brown, Jones, and Robinson declare they have been 'delighted' with your charming work, and another thing to hear every good speech welcomed by the bravos or the laughter of a full house. It is one thing to get a note from your publisher announcing that the edition will soon be run out, and a second must be thought of; another thing to have the 'pit rise at you.' But this excess of triumph is dearly purchased. The dramatist has to endure what the poet or the novelist is happily shielded from."

"Nevertheless, it is evident that the pleasure preponderates. If the applause did not repay the author for his tribulations, the drama would be deserted; whereas, it is notorious that a man who has once had the applause ringing in his ears, is eager to try for it again and again."

"Don't lay too much stress on that. Men who have *never* been applauded, and never will be—men who have been foiled in all their

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efforts to get their works put on the stage, are found dauntlessly besieging the theatre. In fact, there is a fascination about the drama which no amount of failure, no amount of irritation, can destroy. I remember one case of an author, now dead, who had wasted his energies and his fortune in the hopeless effort to gain dramatic success. He published tragedy after tragedy which no manager was misguided enough to accept. He engaged a theatre for the purpose of producing his works, one of which was indeed performed amidst yells of laughter, at the cost of his remaining fortune; and he passed the rest of his days in a miserable garret writing plays, calm amid the wreck of his fortunes, and declaring that he would rather live in a garret and write plays, than live in prosperity excluded from the drama. This is an extreme case; but it indicates the fascination."

"Are you not supporting the very proposition you began by contradicting?"

"Not at all. I never denied the attraction which draws men of poetic sensibility, and men of irritable ambition, to the stage; especially when they are innocent of all the vexations which throng the avenues. I simply affirmed that it was a mistake to estimate the career of a dramatist from the superficial view of its one compensating pleasure. Admitting the fact that the applause is greater, more concentrated, heartier, I add that it is purchased by a far greater amount of anxiety, irritation, and disgust; and not only so, but that even on the very night of triumph, we over-estimate the pleasure. We have seen nothing of what preceded the victory; we know nothing of the wounds inflicted in the very moment of success."

"That is true of all authorship. The poet's crown may be splendid, but, as the Pope said, *ça brille, mais ça brûle.*"

"It is peculiarly the case in dramatic authorship, even when successful. Consider for a moment. You have written your play—I speak, of course, of a real work of art, not a thing patched up from a novel, or translated from the French, but a serious effort at tragedy or comedy. If you have written it in ignorance of the stage, or without thought of its being performed, the pleasures of composition are indeed unalloyed; but then the chances of its being represented are proportionately lessened, and the certainty of your vexation increased. If you already know the stage and its requirements, then the exquisite delight in dramatic composition will be thwarted by having to sacrifice your cherished intentions to the inexorable demands of actors and managers. You must mould your work not according to your conceptions of art and nature, but according to the capabilities of the actors, or the prejudices of the stage."

"Well, I don't see much hardship in this; nothing, at least, that may not be matched among the vexations of other forms of art."

"If you were a dramatist you would not speak in that way. But let it pass. Suppose your play written, and sent in. Unless you are already known as a successful writer, your manuscript is deposited with scores of rivals, the very sight of the mass causing the manager to feel uncomfort-

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able, knowing, as he does, that there will be scarcely one piece in a hundred which is not either utterly absurd, or wholly impracticable. You cannot possess yourself of the idea that the manager has not plenty of time to look at your piece; nor dispossess yourself of the idea that if he would only look at it he would at once see that it was a masterpiece, certain to be 'a hit.' You fret impatiently at the inevitable delay. A couple of hours he might surely spare for your *chef-d'œuvre?* Yet these hours, which to you seem so easily spared, are claimed by scores of rivals. Meanwhile he has quite other things to occupy him. Your piece slumbers with the others. You write, and get no answer, or are informed that your piece will be read and considered as soon as possible. The season passes, and you get no reply. Indignant, you withdraw your piece, and present it to a rival theatre—with similar results."

"I don't deny that such things occur; but as far as my experience goes it is only the mediocre or impracticable works—plays or novels—which ever suffer from neglect. There is a wide-spread notion that managers and publishers can with difficulty be brought to look at the work of an unknown author; and I am constantly appealed to 'to use my influence'—as if publishers were mysteriously opposed to their own interest, and had to be persuaded to accept a work which will bring them profit! as if publishers and managers were not, on the contrary, only too anxious to secure any work having the least promise! But the fact is, such heaps of trash are offered, and very properly declined—while every work is confidently believed by its author to be certain of success—that these repeated rejections encourage the idea of a silent opposition to their own interest on the part of managers and publishers. It's all nonsense! If my play is a good one, I shall not find any difficulty in getting it accepted."

"What you say is undoubtedly true of publishers, but I assure you that managers are in general too busy to find time for reading many pieces."

"Yet pieces *are* read, I suppose, since they are occasionally produced?"

"True; only you have little idea how long an unknown author has to wait even for a reading. I say nothing of your feelings when the piece has been read, and is returned to you with a polite note, praising its literary qualities, but intimating that it is not suited to the company; or that the manager's engagements leave him little hope of producing it, and therefore, not to stand in your way, he begs to forward it to you. Of course this is mere varnish. The piece is a bad one—or the manager thinks so, which is the same thing. Your self-love will not let you see through the excuse; and you present the play to another manager, to undergo a repetition of the delay and the vexation."

"All this the unsuccessful novelist has to endure. But we are considering only the successful writers. Let us suppose the play is accepted; all the difficulties are forgotten then?"

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"Forgotten? It is then that the real troubles *begin*."

My friend looked incredulous, so I rehearsed some of the more obvious vexations which beset the dramatist; and as the narrative surprised him, I will repeat it here in fuller detail.

The dramatist hears with no little satisfaction that his work is to be produced, but hears with no little mortification that some alterations will be necessary. Alterations! The work which has cost him so much labour, so much anxious thought, every exit and entrance having been pondered with severe attention, every speech polished and polished with fastidious care, has to be altered, as if it had been put together by a carpenter. He goes to his interview with the manager, resolved not to disturb a line of this "work of art." He is received with gracious and agreeable courtesy, is complimented warmly, but is told with firm friendliness, much like a surgeon's gentleness, that some of his most original and characteristic details are "impracticable." If he is obstinate, he argues the point—not with the slightest success. If he is complying, he sits in grim silence, while the manager's experience of the stage is brought to enlighten him; and he learns that the situation which he has always calculated on as thrilling is in imminent danger of being ridiculous on the stage. The word "impracticable" is freely used; but poets require considerable experience before they learn to distinguish between what is and what is not practicable. Thus I have known an important situation made to depend upon a pathetic song which the lover had to sing. In a drama to be read, there was no difficulty in this; the reader can imagine the young lover singing as easily as talking. In the drama to be acted, there is this difficulty: the tragic actor is not a Mario; if he ever had a voice, he has probably ranted it away; at any rate, the rare accomplishment of singing well enough can hardly be counted on. Thus, either the part must be played by a singer, for the sake of the song; or the song must be cut out. I mention this as an illustration of the kind of impracticabilities which an inexperienced author is liable to fall into.

By the time his interview with the manager is at an end, it is lucky if all that the author most prizes for its originality has not been ruthlessly condemned; and his piece, from being a well-considered work of art, is mutilated into commonplace. What he has suffered under this surgery I leave you to imagine. However, rather than be frustrated entirely, he sadly consents to alter his work, to destroy its fair proportions, and to make it "actable."

Then comes the reading in the green-room. Great moment! Long-wished-for occasion! When I used to hear of an author reading his piece to the actors, it sent an imaginative thrill through me, and I pictured my delight should ever such a moment of triumph be mine. When the moment did arrive, it was not at all like my anticipations. In a state of fluttering depression I reached the theatre, and found actors and actresses standing about the dark stage. I was presented to them, feeling mingled pleasure at being thus brought into contact with artists long

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admired on the stage, and anxiety at the idea of their co-operation being essential to my success. How civil I was to them all! Into the dingy green-room we went, and I was quickly seated at the table, my mouth dry and my pulse throbbing. Unrolling the manuscript with great nervousness, I cleared my voice, and began. Of course I read detestably (most authors do, and have no suspicion of the fact), and was very anxious to impress upon the actors clear conceptions of their several parts.

Those were the days of innocence, when faith in art (especially in my own) made me imagine that actors and actresses were intensely interested in the play as a work of art, and not simply interested in their parts. I little suspected the truth, that according to his part will each actor judge of the play. If his character is one which seems to offer him opportunities of display he will be enthusiastic about the drama; if he has misgivings about his part, he will be despondent about the play; and if he positively dislikes his part he will predict a fiasco. And this is perfectly natural. The *amour propre* of the actor is no less engaged than that of the dramatist. Success to him also is the breath of life. He cannot help viewing the piece solely in relation to himself. It pains you when first you make the discovery; but if you are wise you will admit that it is quite excusable. He is indifferent to art, you think, and ought to be interested in your success. But are not you equally indifferent to his success, thinking only of your own?

As I said, the reading began. At first all were attentive, expectant. I got over my nervousness, and began to read better. But very shortly I became aware that the actors were trying to discover which parts were intended for them; and having discovered this, their attention slackened in all those scenes from which they were absent. This was a small torture. In vain I threw fresh fervour into the reading; from the corner of my eye I perceived that while the lovers were having their interview, the villain, the heavy father, the comic servant, and the pert soubrette, were wholly insensible to my impassioned dialogue, quite unmoved by the delicacies of style. If you have ever read a work of your own to an inattentive audience, you may imagine the sensations of one who is reading a play to the actors upon whose interest and co-operation his fate depends, and observes the villain's eye wandering from the ceiling to his boots, the comic servant intent upon the condition of his finger-nails, and the soubrette scanning the bonnet of the leading actress.

Nor is this the worst. It may happen, very probably will happen, that as the reading proceeds you become vaguely aware of a certain mute opposition which is quite disheartening. The leading actor who was at first full of hope begins to feel his part ineffective, or perceives the part of his rival becoming too effective. The principal actress finds herself too long absent from the scene, or present during scenes when others make long speeches to her, which she has to "feed" with interjections, or feeble inquiries. No sooner are such discoveries made than you read the discontent in their faces. Instead of radiant sympathetic listeners, the

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leading actor becomes gloomy and abstracted, or fidgets in his seat; the actress pinches her mouth with ominous reserve, and keeps her eyes downcast.

At last this stage of torture is over. You close the manuscript to the sound of obligatory applause. If the parts have interested several of the actors, the applause is genuine and hearty; for so long as their vanity is not in danger, actors are very sympathetic, and take a real delight in anything admirable. They are a pleasant set of human creatures; and if their infirmities sometimes cause you pain, you cannot see much of them without liking and respecting them. If only one or two have been pleased with their parts, the applause rings hollow, and you know the effect you have produced. Then the parts are distributed. Each actor receives in silence a small manuscript containing the "words" of the part allotted to him. He puts it in his pocket without comment, and quits the room, joining the other malcontents on the stage, or in the porter's hall, freely canvassing the play, or predicting its failure. Somehow the author always knows this: partly he *feels* it, partly he divines it, and partly his attention is pointed to it by the remarks of the actors who, being satisfied with their parts, remain to compliment him: they laughingly remark that "B. is not over-pleased," and that "C. will throw up his part."

You quit the theatre with strange noises in your head, and heavy forebodings at your heart. You tell your wife all. That sympathetic woman stigmatizes the conduct of the malcontents in terms of great energy; but consoles herself and you with the reflection that "the piece will be played, let B. and C. like it or dislike it." She may be wrong here. The piece may *not* be played, even after having been rehearsed. In my early days, I remember getting a brief note from a manager, requesting me to step down to the theatre, as he wished to speak with me on the subject of my comedy. With some uneasiness I entered his room, dimly apprehending an unpleasant communication. Judge of my feelings on hearing that the leading actor had thrown up his part! To make the misfortune greater, there was no other man then on the stage to whom the part could have been entrusted. I was advised to call on the recusant, and try my power of persuasion; though I daresay the manager knew well enough the hopelessness of the attempt. Sick at heart, I jumped into a cab, went, was politely received, and quietly but firmly assured that the part was not one the distinguished actor could consent to play. I argued and entreated, in vain. "There are *no laughs* in the part," was the inexorable answer.

"But, my dear sir," I pleaded, "it is not *meant* to be a part to excite laughter so much as admiration for intellectual subtlety and quiet finesse. It is a sort of Talleyrand; it is high comedy."

"Yes, I know, I know; monstrous clever, and all that; but without laughs it is no *part*. If I were a young man beginning my career I might jump at such a chance; as it is, I really can't play it. I must have laughs."

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"What is to be done? No one can touch the part but yourself."

"No one. Without me the piece would be damned."

"Surely you will not, by refusal, prevent my piece being played?"

"I am very sorry, very; but I can't play it, and without me the piece would be damned."

This was the constant *refrain*. I quitted the house, boiling with indignation. Such cruel egoism! to blight a young author's prospects merely because the admiration of the audience for the artist did not suffice for the vanity which craved the vulgar applause of laughter!

Yet, now I look back on those days, I see that my indignation was simply my own egoism reproaching him for his. He was doubly right. Right in perceiving that the part was *not* one which could be effective, consequently one which a fine actor ought not to be asked to play; and right in preferring his own interest to mine—as I preferred mine to his. If I could have had such clear vision then, I should have thought less unworthily of him, and have made less bad blood in fuming at my own mistake. To give the finishing touch to this anecdote, I will add that on reporting my ill success to the manager, he completed my despair by asking—if I couldn't alter the part into one for Keeley?

It may perhaps be objected that had my piece been better I should have escaped this; which is true. I only mentioned the case as an illustration of the vexations to which the dramatist is specially liable. When the novelist has secured the acceptance of his work, his initiatory troubles are at an end. Publishers, to begin with, are far from being so troublesome as managers. Indeed, after a long experience of both, I can conscientiously say that, except in one instance, I never met with anything but courtesy, liberality, and ready attention from publishers, whereas of only one manager can I say all this. No doubt the chief reason is that the manager is so much more harassed than the publisher, and the production of a new play is to him so much greater a *risk* than the production of a new book. But let us suppose that the initiatory troubles and vexations are equal up to the point of acceptance: at this stage the novelist is at ease; the MS. goes to the printer, proofs arrive; the book is published, and speaks directly to the public, certain to meet with the success which its adaptation to public taste can secure for it. Not so with the accepted drama. The serious difficulties begin, as I said, at rehearsal. Unlike a book, a drama cannot directly speak to the public; it has to address audiences through the medium of a *representative* art. Instead of calculable elements—such as printer's types—it employs the incalculable elements—human actors, mutable, capricious, imperfect. If I write a fine verse, the printers will set it forth in types which everywhere, and at all seasons, will carry that verse directly home to the intelligent mind; but the actors who are charged with speaking that verse—publishing it for me—may mangle or mouth it, so that the audience shall be moved to laughter or contempt. If the printer's proof is sent to me with imperfections I can easily correct them; but how can I correct the actor's proof—

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which is rehearsal—unless I am dealing with a very intelligent and complying actor? Now it is unnecessary to say that not all actors are very intelligent and very complying. Even when intelligent, they are human beings, subject to the mutable motives and caprices of men. They have their interests to attend to, and their vanity to misguide them. Rehearsal brings these out. First let me note that it is only good actors who ever *act* at rehearsal; the others gabble over the words, and when by emphasis or manner they unmistakeably betray some misapprehension of the part, they answer your objections with the one invariable formula: "It will be all right at night." You have horrible misgivings that it will be all wrong at night; but what can you do? Bad actors are unteachable, incorrigible. They will take no hint; they resent advice. I remember once trying to convince an actor that the whole effect of his exit in a pathetic situation would be ruined unless he spoke his few words in a faltering tone of subdued emotion, instead of "taking the stage" and ranting his farewell. He haughtily informed me that he had been on the stage five-and-twenty years—and *that*, of course, was an answer to everything. Being unable to persuade him that "farewell" was never pronounced "*far*well" off the stage, I was obliged to cut the word out.

Among smaller irritations, you have to endure the endless suggestions of the actors to have their parts altered—a speech put in for them here, or "written up" there. One man, whose only qualification I ever could discover was the "bend in his back," of which he was not a little proud, pestered me day after day to have some confidence in him. He wanted, especially, a "dying scene;" he was certain he could produce a great effect with a death; but, as the structure of the piece required him to live, I could hardly confide in him to that extent. This seemed a hardship; he was so sure of "bringing the house down" with a good dying scene. Had there been a chance of its breaking his back, I might have been tempted. You are also continually plagued for "exit speeches." No actor willingly quits the scene without a point, or something to raise a laugh—"something to take him off," as the phrase goes. It matters not how little relation this speech may have to the business of the scene; the one imperious desire is for an exit speech. A manager once drew a friend of mine aside, and with some earnestness, said—

"I wish you could give B. an exit speech in this scene; his position in the theatre demands it."

"Perhaps so; but his position in the play doesn't admit of one."

"Oh, anything will do—just something to get him off."

"But, I ask you, *what* can he say?"

"H'm! I don't know———Why not a curse? *B.'s position in the theatre demands a curse.*"

"Oh," said the author, laughing, "two curses if you like."

"The very thing! *B. would like two curses!*"

Another friend was pestered by a comic servant for an exit speech in a scene where he had to hurry off the stage—summarily dismissed by his

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master. He was told that the occasion did not possibly admit of a speech. He was silent; but imagine the author's feelings at night when he saw the actor toss up the half-crown he had received at an earlier part of the scene, and exclaim—"Welcome, little stranger!"

In Victor Hugo's memoirs, just published, there are several stories of the vexations to which he had to submit during the rehearsal of his plays, and these are the more illustrative because he was an author of immense reputation. Mdlle. Mars, for example, accepted the character of Doña Sol, in *Hernani*, not because she liked it, but because she did not choose that a rival should play in it. Here is a specimen of her demeanour at rehearsal:—

"Pardon, mon ami," she would say to Firmin or Joanny, "I want to speak to the author."

The actor paused with a nod of assent. Mdlle. Mars walked up to the footlights, put her hand up to her eyes, and although, of course, perfectly aware of the spot in the orchestra where Hugo sat, pretended to look for him.

"M. Hugo; is he there?"

Hugo rose—"Here, madame."

"Ah! very good; thanks....M. Hugo, I have to say this verse—

'Vous êtes mon lion superbe et généreux.'

Do you like that, M. Hugo?"

"What?"

"*Vous êtes mon lion.*"

"I wrote it, madame, so I must have thought it all right."

"Then you stick to your lion?"

"Yes, and no, madame; find me something better, and I will substitute it."

"It is not for me to do that; I am not the author."

"In that case, madame, let us leave it as it is written."

"The fact is, it sounds so droll to call Firmin *my lion*."

"That is because you forget that you are Doña Sol, and only remember you are Mdlle. Mars."

"Well, since you must have your lion, no more need be said. I am here to speak what is written, and *my lion* is in the manuscript. I will say *my lion*—it is all the same to me. Come, Firmin—

'Vous êtes mon lion superbe et généreux.'"

On the following day the same scene recommenced. She asked him if he had reflected on his *lion*, and being informed that no thought had been given to it, asked him if he did not think it dangerous.

"I don't know what you call dangerous."

"I call that dangerous which may be hissed."

"Madame, I never had the pretension of not being hissed."

"Good; but one must be hissed as little as possible."

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"You think the lion will be hissed. In that case you will not have spoken it with your accustomed talent."

"I will do my best. Nevertheless, I should prefer something else; for example—

'Vous êtes monseigneur superbe et généreux.'

Does not *monseigneur* make out the verse as well as *mon lion?*"

"With this difference: *mon lion* is poetical, and *monseigneur* commonplace. I would rather be hissed for a good verse than applauded for a bad one."

"Well, well, don't let us quarrel; I will speak your good verse. Allons, mon ami Firmin,—

'Vous êtes mon lion superbe et généreux.'"

Irritated by scenes like this, Victor Hugo threatened to give the part to another actress. "Mdlle. Mars was no longer impertinent, but she was dumb. She protested against the piece by her icy manner. Her example chilled the others."

It is difficult for one who has had no experience of the stage to understand the galling trials which the dramatist has to endure from the sullen, silent opposition of dissatisfied actors. I do not blame the actors; I only pity the author. In every play there must be characters of inferior effectiveness, yet sometimes requiring the aid of good actors. There are pieces which, either owing to the necessities of the story, or the defectiveness of its construction, allow of only one or two good parts. We can hardly expect an actor to throw himself heartily into a part which he knows will bring him no applause; and when, at the same time, he sees a rival in possession of a part which will be effective, and will overshadow him, we can hardly expect that he will stifle his *amour propre* and devote himself to the author's success. It is always a great difficulty to get actors to play up to each other, unless their own parts are thrown into strong relief by it. You can understand that if A. has some terrible announcement to make to B., the effect of this will be greatly heightened by B.'s face and manner showing terror or interest, and will be proportionately lessened if B. is looking away, or remains unmoved. When King John hints his designs to Hubert, part of the effect will depend on Hubert's playing up to the King. But actors can with difficulty be brought to assist each other thus; and hence the advantage of husband and wife or brother and sister playing together; they are interested in each other's success. Rivals will not assist each other; they often do their best quietly to thwart each other. A friend of mine once asked an actress why she did not get a celebrated actor to look at her, and express interest in the narrative she had to deliver. "Oh!" she replied, "I can't expect Mr. —— to look at me; it's *my scene*, you know!"

This is a chronic difficulty; you can imagine how it is heightened when the actors are in a state of dissatisfaction with their parts, and

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consequently do not wish the play to succeed. Nor is this without its effect on the audience. Acting is an art which depends largely on a state of sympathy between the actors and the public; whatever chills the confidence of the one lessens the pleasure of the other. No one ever knows what piece will succeed or what character will be a hit; half the prosperity of the effect lies with the audience. In this state of uncertainty, unless the actor be encouraged to believe that he will produce an effect, he is very liable to fail. And his confidence may often be shaken at rehearsal by the conduct and remarks of others. I once read a piece to the principal actor and actress. Their unmistakeable interest, their applause, and her tears, convinced me that with them, at least, I might feel at ease; and as the other parts were comparatively insignificant, I thought in my innocence that my success was secured. At the reading in the green-room I observed, without surprise, the gloomy reserve of two or three who disapproved of their parts, and expected one at least to throw up his part. But no. Rehearsals began. I *felt* the discontent diffused through the theatre, silent, but unmistakeable. I was heedless of it—my principal actors remained firm. In a few days, however, the general depression began to affect them; they became uneasy, afraid of certain passages, which before had delighted them. I tried to inspirit them, but saw with each rehearsal that their doubts grew stronger. They knew what was the opinion current in the theatre; they knew that failure was confidently predicted, and they began to fear. At last one unlucky word was uttered respecting the principal part, which it was "feared" might prove dangerous. From that day the struggle became hopeless. As a matter of self-preservation I withdrew the piece. You think I ought to have gone on? Well, it is possible that had the actor been somewhat less impressionable, or somewhat more self-confident, he might have resisted all this opposition, and made the piece a triumph; but it is far more likely that, troubled by misgivings, he would have played feebly, and then the failure would have been inevitable.

These troubles, you will observe, are not accidental, but essential; they will be active in every theatre, and in every country. I need not say how they become aggravated by the tyranny of "stars," or by that still more vexatious tyranny which reigns in a theatre where the manager's wife, or *chère amie*, is an actress, and an indifferent one, to whom everything must give way. It is bad enough when the manager is also an actor; but the manager's wife! The novelist and poet happily know nothing of miseries like these.

Another immunity belongs to the novelist and poet from the fact that they require no medium between them and the public. The drama *represents*. Now there are many imaginative conceptions which cannot be represented on the stage without peril, and some that become positively ridiculous. In a novel or a poem the sudden opening of the clouds and appearance of the moon looking down with silent solemnity on a murder which has just been committed in secrecy and darkness may thrill the

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murderer with horror and remorse; but when this comes to be represented on the stage, the parting of carpenters' clouds, and the appearance of a feeble stage-moon, will certainly produce no solemn impression, and will probably cause a titter. Then, again, there is the dangerous material of inferior actors. The author conceives a group of noblemen, or a party of young men of fashion; these have to be represented by "supers," men engaged to "go on" at a shilling a night. In a comedy written in my days of inexperience, there was a scene, the idea of which was droll enough, and taken from reality: the young hero, flushed with wine, had affectionately invited a number of strangers to breakfast with him next morning, went to bed, slept off the effects of the supper, and awoke forgetting all about it. Next morning one by one the guests arrive, and the confusion may be imagined! This scene the manager proved to me to be utterly impracticable, because the guests would necessarily have to be represented by "supers;" and how *they* would represent young Cantabs it is needless to say. Some one has said: "Supers are the small-pox of the drama; where they do not *kill*, they leave indelible *scars*."

The exigencies of representation often inflict great pangs on the author by forcing him to cut out what he considers to be his finest passages. They may be fine; but a passage which in the reading would be universally admired, may, in the acting, cause the audience to yawn. It is difficult to persuade the author of this. Sheridan Knowles never learned the simple relations of quantity; and although at rehearsal he was implored to shorten speeches, obstinately refused to cut out a line. After the first night he was the first to propose heroic slashing, because then he had felt how the length of speeches damaged certain scenes.

Apropos of "cutting out the poetry," so much dreaded by poetic dramatists, I may tell a story of an author, now deceased. He was a regular writer for the theatres, but had not yet ventured on such high flights as tragedy. One day he said to his manager, "I'm going to say something—I know you'll laugh, but I don't care. Well, I've written a tragedy, which I should like you to see." He was asked to send it; did so; and thus the story proceeds in his own words: "Well, sir, a few days afterwards I got this note from him: 'My dear ——, Of all the preposterous things I ever read, your tragedy is the most stupendous. But come and dine with me to-morrow at six.' Just like him: wounds your feelings in the tenderest point, and then tries to wipe it out with the dirty bribe of a dinner. However, I went. He told me to *cut out all the poetry*, and send it to Astley's. I did; and it ran a hundred nights. So you see what a piece it must have been."

I have not enumerated all the vexations which precede the First Night; but have named enough to prove my case. The day of publication to a novelist or poet is a supremely happy day; as the work lies before him, he fondles it, dips into it, imagines the effect it is going to produce, and writes the names of friends and big-wigs in the "presentation copies" (never read, not always acknowledged), with a sense of drawing

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cheques on the bank of Fame. He thinks only of the vast public. If some "envious critics" (all who do not praise a work are envious) and some stupid readers fail to detect his merit, he can appeal from them to that noble but mysterious entity, the General Reader, supposed capable of the most delicate and generous appreciation. Far otherwise feels the dramatist. He has horrible misgivings. The last rehearsal was anything but perfect. Some of the actors had not yet mastered "the words." It is to be all right at night; and he hopes it will be. Moreover, he knows that this night's publication is final. Unless he pleases the audience he has no chance of reaching the great public. The verdict is instantaneous, and admits of no appeal. The pit has no time to ponder; first impressions are final on the stage. So anxious is the trial of a first night, that some authors shirk the slow agony, and keep away from the theatre until the joyful news of success is brought them. I should have suffered more from apprehension, so I always braved the chances, seated at the back of a private box.

The house is slowly filling. You are on the stage, trying to encourage the actors by admiring their "get up," and predicting what they will effect with certain scenes; looking through the hole in the curtain to see who has come, and whether there is a good pit; and trying to share the manager's confidence that "B. is certain to be all right." The overture begins. You see critics and friends scattered about the boxes; and the pit is rapidly filling. You are passed from the stage to your private box, and the curtain rises. A first-night audience is always good-natured; not only are there many friends of the author come to "ensure a success," and really anxious that the piece should succeed; but the bulk of the indifferent public is only too willing to admire and be pleased. Any chance of applause is eagerly sought by friends and willingly accepted by the audience.

You are thrilled with the plaudits; but you sit in alternations of triumph and agony, for, although the piece may be "going famously," you are but too painfully conscious of all its defects. You sit there condemned to endure poetry mangled, wit blunted, and conceptions distorted. The man who, at rehearsal, was "letter perfect," is nervous, and makes havoc with the verse. The actress who was charming in one scene at rehearsal, is totally without charm to-night. Effects upon which you calculated fall flat; passages are suddenly revealed as perilous; too late you see a hundred errors, and you foresee rocks ahead. More than once an author thus frightened and enlightened has rushed behind the scenes, and arranged to omit a scene or passage because of the risk. The applause may keep up your sinking courage, but it does not protect you from these pangs.

Amid such fluctuations, the piece proceeds. At last the curtain falls to immense cheering. Vociferous shouts of "Author! author!" burst out like rockets from all sides. This is a supreme moment. You bow from your box and love mankind. Every man and woman of that intelli-

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gent pit is your friend. You hurry behind the scenes to congratulate and be congratulated, to compliment and be complimented, to shake the leading actors warmly by the hand, and gratefully salute the cheek of the heroine —if she will let you. With generous, effusive insincerity you find yourself complimenting the very actors whose stupidity but a little while since evoked curses not loud but deep. One or two well-known dramatists and critics are on the stage, and perhaps a nobleman of theatrical tastes; to these you are presented, and by these you are congratulated. It is a wild, delirious moment. But the stage has to be cleared for the after-piece. You make an appointment to be at the theatre to-morrow at eleven, "to go over the piece;" and either, if you are wise, return to your home to gladden your wife with the news; or, if you are otherwise, join a few friends at supper.

"The supper after the play" might form a chapter by itself. Sometimes the author, confident of success, invites his guests beforehand, and if the success has been equivocal, this makes it rather awkward for the friends. Sometimes the manager provides supper. I remember one, given by a manager now dead, who was more hospitable than literate, and who had invited the chief actors, two dramatic critics (whom I saw writing their columns in corners of his private room), and some "literary friends," myself included, to rejoice over the successes of a drama called the *Broken Heart.* A jovial and joyous supper it was. At an early period the enthusiastic *impresario* rose, and lifting his champagne glass in the air, said, in a voice tremulous with nervousness (or drink), "Ladies and gentlemen,—It is with feelings of very particular pleasure, and I may say gratification, that I rise to propose a toast, which I am sure you will all agree with me is well deserved, and I am sure you will drink with all the honours: '*Here's to the Broken 'Art, and the 'And which guided it.*'"

Of what followed, I have only a dim recollection of much noise, extravagant eulogies, a gradually increasing introduction of the name of Shakspeare, which at first was mentioned with timidity, and a sort of vinous conviction that the 'And had inaugurated a new era of dramatic art. I hope, for his own sake, that the author was sufficiently wise to accept all this eulogy with the necessary "discount," or sufficiently heated with wine not to have understood it; otherwise he must have tumbled into bed that morning with an inflated sense of his greatness, and must have waked up with considerable astonishment to read in the morning papers that he was, after all, *not* S hakspeare.

I shall not touch upon the dramatist in relation to the critics, because whatever he may have to endure on that score is not peculiar to him. There is, however, a source of vexation after the triumph which may be mentioned. I have said that the first-night audience is always good-natured; it is more, it is intelligent. The number of critics, old play-goers, and (if the author has a name in the world) of literary men present on a first night, leaven the audience in a surprising manner. But if this

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has its advantages, it has also its drawbacks. Many a passage which went brilliantly at first, passes unnoticed ever afterwards; and the disappointed author notices it with disgust. It was remarked that Douglas Jerrold's plays were always triumphant on the first night. The audience appreciated his wit; the laughter was incessant. Afterwards, the unadulterated public listened with stolid faces to those flashing repartees; for it is unhappily the fact that our audiences seldom laugh at any but the oldest jokes—the family Joe Millers—the Wandering Jews *d'esprit*—and if you offer them wit at all, it must be wit they already know.

On the supposition, then, that your comedy has really been witty and successful, there are great chances against its taking hold of the public unless it have other theatrical qualities. The same may be said of your tragedy: a first-night audience may applaud speeches which will afterwards be listened to with impatience. Hence it is that many a man has flattered himself that he has achieved a great dramatic success, and has perhaps incurred expenses on the strength of it, when, after a few nights' run, the work is withdrawn because the public would not come to see it. At one of those suppers just mentioned, a play was freely spoken of as destined "to live in the literature of our country." It was performed four nights.

Thus, if the applause received by the dramatist be more concentrated and intoxicating than the applause received by the novelist or poet, it is purchased by a far greater amount of vexation, and the failure is proportionately emphatic. Moreover, if, in rare exceptional cases, his work has the immense benefit of being presented to the public through the medium of fine acting, which of course intensifies its effect; on the other hand, this strong light can only be shed on one or two parts—bad acting will as much distort his work in the other parts. True it undoubtedly is that a fine actor will sometimes raise an insignificant part into one of surprising effect; but much oftener the actors rob their parts of all significance. Now, the dramatist is far less grateful to the fine actor for his aid (because not so conscious of it) than he is wrath with the bad actor for his failures. What is the most cherished hope of every author? That he may be understood; that his work may be fairly brought before the public. What, then, must be the misery of the dramatic author who has to see his work mutilated to fit it for the stage, and mangled when produced?

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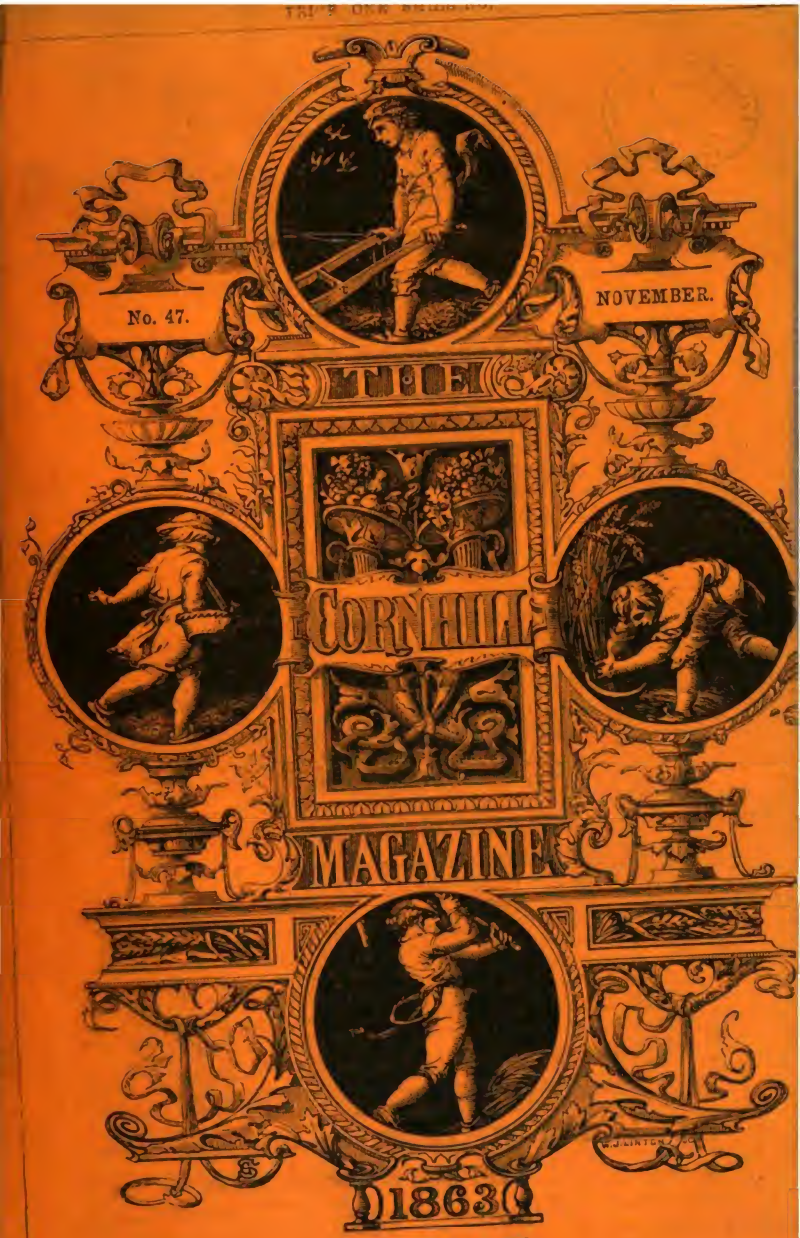

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"MAMMA," SHE SAID AT LAST, "IT IS OVER NOW, I'M SURE."

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THE

CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

NOVEMBER, 1863.

The Small House at Allington.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Fie, Fie!

WILL any reader remember the loves,—no, not the loves; that word is so decidedly ill applied as to be incapable of awakening the remembrance of any reader; but the flirtations—of Lady Dumbello and Mr. Plantagenet Palliser? Those flirtations, as they had been carried on at Courcy Castle, were laid bare in all their enormities to the eye of the public, and it must be confessed that if the eye of the public was shocked, that eye must be shocked very easily.

But the eye of the public was shocked, and people who were particular as to their morals said very strange things. Lady De Courcy herself said very strange things indeed, shaking her head, and dropping mysterious

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words; whereas Lady Clandidlem spoke much more openly, declaring her opinion that Lady Dumbello would be off before May. They both agreed that it would not be altogether bad for Lord Dumbello that he should lose his wife, but shook their heads very sadly when they spoke of poor Plantagenet Palliser. As to the lady's fate, that lady whom they had both almost worshipped during the days at Courcy Castle,—they did not seem to trouble themselves about that.

And it must be admitted that Mr. Palliser had been a little imprudent,—imprudent, that is, if he knew anything about the rumours afloat,—seeing that soon after his visit at Courcy Castle he had gone down to Lady Hartletop's place in Shropshire, at which the Dumbellos intended to spend the winter, and on leaving it had expressed his intention of returning in February. The Hartletop people had pressed him very much,—the pressure having come with peculiar force from Lord Dumbello. Therefore it is reasonable to suppose that the Hartletop people had at any rate not heard of the rumour.

Mr. Plantagenet Palliser spent his Christmas with his uncle, the Duke of Omnium, at Gatherum Castle. That is to say, he reached the castle in time for dinner on Christmas eve, and left it on the morning after Christmas day. This was in accordance with the usual practice of his life, and the tenants, dependants, and followers of the Omnium interest were always delighted to see this manifestation of a healthy English domestic family feeling between the duke and his nephew. But the amount of intercourse on such occasions between them was generally trifling. The duke would smile as he put out his right hand to his nephew, and say,—

"Well, Plantagenet,—very busy, I suppose?"

The duke was the only living being who called him Plantagenet to his face, though there were some scores of men who talked of Planty Pal behind his back. The duke had been the only living being so to call him. Let us hope that it still was so, and that there had arisen no feminine exception, dangerous in its nature and improper in its circumstances.

"Well, Plantagenet," said the duke, on the present occasion, "very busy, I suppose?"

"Yes, indeed, duke," said Mr. Palliser. "When a man gets the harness on him he does not easily get quit of it."

The duke remembered that his nephew had made almost the same remark at his last Christmas visit.

"By-the-by," said the duke, "I want to say a word or two to you before you go."

Such a proposition on the duke's part was a great departure from his usual practice, but the nephew of course undertook to obey his uncle's behests.

"I'll see you before dinner to-morrow," said Plantagenet.

"Ah, do," said the duke. "I'll not keep you five minutes." And

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at six o'clock on the following afternoon the two were closeted together in the duke's private room.

"I don't suppose there is much in it," began the duke, "but people are talking about you and Lady Dumbello."

"Upon my word, people are very kind." And Mr. Palliser bethought himself of the fact,—for it certainly was a fact,—that people for a great many years had talked about his uncle and Lady Dumbello's mother-in-law.

"Yes; kind enough; are they not? You've just come from Hartlebury, I believe." Hartlebury was the Marquis of Hartletop's seat in Shropshire.

"Yes, I have. And I'm going there again in February."

"Ah, I'm sorry for that. Not that I mean, of course, to interfere with your arrangements. You will acknowledge that I have not often done so, in any matter whatever."

"No; you have not," said the nephew, comforting himself with an inward assurance that no such interference on his uncle's part could have been possible.

"But in this instance it would suit me, and I really think it would suit you too, that you should be as little at Hartlebury as possible. You have said you would go there, and of course you will go. But if I were you, I would not stay above a day or two."

Mr. Plantagenet Palliser received everything he had in the world from his uncle. He sat in Parliament through his uncle's interest, and received an allowance of ever so many thousand a year, which his uncle could stop to-morrow by his mere word. He was his uncle's heir, and the dukedom, with certain entailed properties, must ultimately fall to him, unless his uncle should marry and have a son. But by far the greater portion of the duke's property was unentailed; the duke might probably live for the next twenty years or more; and it was quite possible that, if offended, he might marry and become a father. It may be said that no man could well be more dependent on another than Plantagenet Palliser was upon his uncle; and it may be said also that no father or uncle ever troubled his heir with less interference. Nevertheless, the nephew immediately felt himself aggrieved by this allusion to his private life, and resolved at once that he would not submit to such surveillance.

"I don't know how long I shall stay," said he; "but I cannot say that my visit will be influenced one way or the other by such a rumour as that."

"No; probably not. But it may perhaps be influenced by my request." And the duke, as he spoke, looked a little savage.

"You wouldn't ask me to regard a report that has no foundation."

"I am not asking about its foundation. Nor do I in the least wish to interfere with your manner in life." By which last observation the duke intended his nephew to understand that he was quite at liberty to take away any other gentleman's wife, but that he was not at liberty to give

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occasion even for a surmise that he wanted to take Lord Dumbello's wife. "The fact is this, Plantagenet. I have for many years been intimate with that family. I have not many intimacies, and shall probably never increase them. Such friends as I have, I wish to keep, and you will easily perceive that any such report as that which I have mentioned, might make it unpleasant for me to go to Hartlebury, or for the Hartlebury people to come here." The duke certainly could not have spoken plainer, and Mr. Palliser understood him thoroughly. Two such alliances between the two families could not be expected to run pleasantly together, and even the rumour of any such second alliance might interfere with the pleasantness of the former one.

"That's all," said the duke.

"It's a most absurd slander," said Mr. Palliser.

"I dare say. Those slanders always are absurd; but what can we do? We can't tie up people's tongues." And the duke looked as though he wished to have the subject considered as finished, and to be left alone.

"But we can disregard them," said the nephew, indiscreetly.

"You may. I have never been able to do so. And yet, I believe, I have not earned for myself the reputation of being subject to the voices of men. You think that I am asking much of you; but you should remember that hitherto I have given much and have asked nothing. I expect you to oblige me in this matter."

Then Mr. Plantagenet Palliser left the room, knowing that he had been threatened. What the duke had said amounted to this.—If you go on dangling after Lady Dumbello, I'll stop the seven thousand a year which I give you. I'll oppose your next return at Silverbridge, and I'll make a will and leave away from you Matching and the Horns,—a beautiful little place in Surrey, the use of which had been already offered to Mr. Palliser in the event of his marriage; all the Littlebury estate in Yorkshire, and the enormous Scotch property. Of my personal goods, and money invested in loans, shares, and funds, you shall never touch a shilling, or the value of a shilling. And, if I find that I can suit myself, it may be that I'll leave you plain Mr. Plantagenet Palliser, with a little first cousin for the head of your family.

The full amount of this threat Mr. Palliser understood, and, as he thought of it, he acknowledged to himself that he had never felt for Lady Dumbello anything like love. No conversation between them had ever been warmer than that of which the reader has seen a sample. Lady Dumbello had been nothing to him. But now,—now that the matter had been put before him in this way, might it not become him, as a gentleman, to fall in love with so very beautiful a woman, whose name had already been linked with his own? We all know that story of the priest, who, by his question in the confessional, taught the ostler to grease the horses' teeth. "I never did yet," said the ostler, "but I'll have a try at it." In this case, the duke had acted the part of the priest, and

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Mr. Palliser, before the night was over, had almost become as ready a pupil as the ostler. As to the threat, it would ill become him, as a Palliser and a Plantagenet, to regard it. The duke would not marry. Of all men in the world he was the least likely to spite his own face by cutting off his own nose; and, for the rest of it, Mr. Palliser would take his chance. Therefore he went down to Hartlebury early in February, having fully determined to be very particular in his attentions to Lady Dumbello.

Among a houseful of people at Hartlebury, he found Lord Porlock, a slight, sickly, worn-out looking man, who had something about his eye of his father's hardness, but nothing in his mouth of his father's ferocity.

"So your sister's going to be married?" said Mr. Palliser.

"Yes. One has no right to be surprised at anything they do, when one remembers the life their father leads them."

"I was going to congratulate you."

"Don't do that."

"I met him at Courcy, and rather liked him."

Mr. Palliser had barely spoken to Mr. Crosbie at Courcy, but then in the usual course of his social life he seldom did more than barely speak to anybody.

"Did you?" said Lord Porlock. "For the poor girl's sake I hope he's not a ruffian. How any man should propose to my father to marry a daughter out of his house, is more than I can understand. How was my mother looking?"

"I didn't see anything amiss about her."

"I expect that he'll murder her some day." Then that conversation came to an end.

Mr. Palliser himself perceived,—as he looked at her he could not but perceive,—that a certain amount of social energy seemed to enliven Lady Dumbello when he approached her. She was given to smile when addressed, but her usual smile was meaningless, almost leaden, and never in any degree flattering to the person to whom it was accorded. Very many women smile as they answer the words which are spoken to them, and most who do so flatter by their smile. The thing is so common that no one thinks of it. The flattering pleases, but means nothing. The impression unconsciously taken simply conveys a feeling that the woman has made herself agreeable, as it was her duty to do,—agreeable, as far as that smile went, in some very infinitesimal degree. But she has thereby made her little contribution to society. She will make the same contribution a hundred times in the same evening. No one knows that she has flattered anybody; she does not know it herself; and the world calls her an agreeable woman. But Lady Dumbello put no flattery into her customary smiles. They were cold, unmeaning, accompanied by no special glance of the eye, and seldom addressed to the individual. They were given to the room at large; and the room at large, acknowledging

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her great pretensions, accepted them as sufficient. But when Mr. Palliser came near to her she would turn herself slightly, ever so slightly, on her seat, and would allow her eyes to rest for a moment upon his face. Then when he remarked that it had been rather cold, she would smile actually upon him as she acknowledged the truth of his observation. All this Mr. Palliser taught himself to observe, having been instructed by his foolish uncle in that lesson as to the greasing of the horses' teeth.

But, nevertheless, during the first week of his stay at Hartlebury, he did not say a word to her more tender than his observation about the weather. It is true that he was very busy. He had undertaken to speak upon the address, and as Parliament was now about to be opened, and as his speech was to be based upon statistics, he was full of figures and papers. His correspondence was pressing, and the day was seldom long enough for his purposes. He felt that the intimacy to which he aspired was hindered by the laborious routine of his life; but nevertheless he would do something before he left Hartlebury, to show the special nature of his regard. He would say something to her, that should open to her view the secret of—shall we say his heart? Such was his resolve, day after day. And yet day after day went by, and nothing was said. He fancied that Lord Dumbello was somewhat less friendly in his manner than he had been, that he put himself in the way and looked cross; but, as he declared to himself, he cared very little for Lord Dumbello's looks.

"When do you go to town?" he said to her one evening.

"Probably in April. We certainly shall not leave Hartlebury before that."

"Ah, yes. You stay for the hunting."

"Yes; Lord Dumbello always remains here through March. He may run up to town for a day or two."

"How comfortable! I must be in London on Thursday, you know."

"When Parliament meets, I suppose?"

"Exactly. It is such a bore; but one has to do it."

"When a man makes a business of it, I suppose he must."

"Oh, dear, yes; it's quite imperative." Then Mr. Palliser looked round the room and thought he saw Lord Dumbello's eye fixed upon him. It was really very hard work. If the truth must be told, he did not know how to begin. What was he to say to her? How was he to commence a conversation that should end by being tender? She was very handsome certainly, and for him she could look interesting; but for his very life he did not know how to begin to say anything special to her. A liaison with such a woman as Lady Dumbello,—platonic, innocent, but nevertheless very intimate,—would certainly lend a grace to his life, which, under its present circumstances, was rather dry. He was told,—told by public rumour which had reached him through his uncle,—that the lady was willing. She certainly looked as though she liked him; but how was he to begin? The art of startling the House of Commons and frightening

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the British public by the voluminous accuracy of his statistics he had already learned; but what was he to say to a pretty woman?"

"You'll be sure to be in London in April?"

This was on another occasion.

"Oh, yes; I think so."

"In Carlton Gardens, I suppose."

"Yes; Lord Dumbello has got a lease of the house now."

"Has he, indeed? Ah, it's an excellent house. I hope I shall be allowed to call there sometimes."

"Certainly,—only I know you must be so busy."

"Not on Saturdays and Sundays."

"I always receive on Sundays," said Lady Dumbello. Mr. Palliser felt that there was nothing peculiarly gracious in this. A permission to call when all her other acquaintances would be there, was not much; but still, perhaps, it was as much as he could expect to obtain on that occasion. He looked up and saw that Lord Dumbello's eyes were again upon him, and that Lord Dumbello's brow was black. He began to doubt whether a country house, where all the people were thrown together, was the best place in the world for such manœuvring. Lady Dumbello was very handsome, and he liked to look at her, but he could not find any subject on which to interest her in that drawing-room at Hartlebury. Later in the evening he found himself saying something to her about the sugar duties, and then he knew that he had better give it up. He had only one day more, and that was required imperatively for his speech. The matter would go much easier in London, and he would postpone it till then. In the crowded rooms of London private conversation would be much easier, and Lord Dumbello wouldn't stand over and look at him. Lady Dumbello had taken his remarks about the sugar very kindly, and had asked for a definition of an ad valorem duty. It was a nearer approach to a real conversation than he had ever before made; but the subject had been unlucky, and could not, in his hands, be brought round to anything tender; so he resolved to postpone his gallantry till the London spring should make it easy, and felt as he did so, that he was relieved for the time from a heavy weight.

"Good-by, Lady Dumbello," he said, on the next evening. "I start early to-morrow morning."

"Good-by, Mr. Palliser."

As she spoke she smiled ever so sweetly, but she certainly had not learned to call him Plantagenet as yet. He went up to London and immediately got himself to work. The accurate and voluminous speech came off with considerable credit to himself,—credit of that quiet, enduring kind which is accorded to such men. The speech was respectable, dull, and correct. Men listened to it, or sat with their hats over their eyes, asleep, pretending to do so; and the Daily Jupiter in the morning had a leading article about it, which, however, left the reader at its close altogether in doubt whether Mr. Palliser might be supposed to be a great

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financial pundit or no. Mr. Palliser might become a shining light to the moneyed world, and a glory to the banking interests; he might be a future Chancellor of the Exchequer. But then again, it might turn out that, in these affairs, he was a mere ignis fatuus, a blind guide,—a man to be laid aside as very respectable, but of no depth. Who, then, at the present time, could judiciously risk his credit by declaring whether Mr. Palliser understood his subject or did not understand it? We are not content in looking to our newspapers for all the information that earth and human intellect can afford; but we demand from them what we might demand if a daily sheet could come to us from the world of spirits. The result, of course, is this,—that the papers do pretend that they have come daily from the world of spirits; but the oracles are very doubtful, as were those of old.

Plantagenet Palliser, though he was contented with this article, felt, as he sat in his chambers in the Albany, that something else was wanting to his happiness. This sort of life was all very well. Ambition was a grand thing, and it became him, as a Palliser and a future peer, to make politics his profession. But might he not spare an hour or two for Amaryllis in the shade? Was it not hard, this life of his? Since he had been told that Lady Dumbello smiled upon him, he had certainly thought more about her smiles than had been good for his statistics. It seemed as though a new vein in his body had been brought into use, and that blood was running where blood had never run before. If he had seen Lady Dumbello before Dumbello had seen her, might he not have married her? Ah! in such case as that, had she been simply Miss Grantly, or Lady Griselda Grantly, as the case might have been, he thought he might have been able to speak to her with more ease. As it was, he certainly had found the task difficult, down in the country,—though he had heard of men of his class doing the same sort of thing all his life. For my own part, I believe, that the reputed sinners are much more numerous than the sinners.

As he sat there, a certain Mr. Fothergill came in upon him. Mr. Fothergill was a gentleman who managed most of his uncle's ordinary affairs,—a clever fellow, who knew on which side his bread was buttered. Mr. Fothergill was naturally anxious to stand well with the heir; but to stand well with the owner was his business in life, and with that business he never allowed anything to interfere. On this occasion Mr. Fothergill was very civil, complimenting his future possible patron on his very powerful speech, and predicting for him political power with much more certainty than the newspapers which had, or had not, come from the world of spirits. Mr. Fothergill had come in to say a word or two about some matter of business. As all Mr. Palliser's money passed through Mr. Fothergill's hands, and as his electioneering interests were managed by Mr. Fothergill, Mr. Fothergill not unfrequently called to say a necessary word or two. When this was done he said another word or two, which might be necessary or not, as the case might be.

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"Mr. Palliser," said he, "I wonder you don't think of marrying. I hope you'll excuse me."

Mr. Palliser was by no means sure that he would excuse him, and sat himself suddenly upright in his chair in a manner that was intended to exhibit a first symptom of outraged dignity. But, singularly enough, he had himself been thinking of marriage at that moment. How would it have been with him had he known the beautiful Griselda before the Dumbello alliance had been arranged? Would he have married her? Would he have been comfortable if he had married her? Of course he could not marry now, seeing that he was in love with Lady Dumbello, and that the lady in question, unfortunately, had a husband of her own; but though he had been thinking of marrying, he did not like to have the subject thus roughly thrust before his eyes, and, as it were, into his very lap by his uncle's agent. Mr. Fothergill, no doubt, saw the first symptom of outraged dignity, for he was a clever, sharp man. But, perhaps, he did not in truth much regard it. Perhaps he had received instructions which he was bound to regard above all other matters.

"I hope you'll excuse me, Mr. Palliser, I do, indeed; but I say it because I am half afraid of some,—some,—some diminution of good feeling, perhaps, I had better call it, between you and your uncle. Anything of that kind would be such a monstrous pity."

"I am not aware of any such probability." This Mr. Palliser said with considerable dignity; but when the words were spoken he bethought himself whether he had not told a fib.

"No, perhaps not. I trust there is no such probability. But the duke is a very determined man if he takes anything into his head;—and then he has so much in his power."

"He has not me in his power, Mr. Fothergill."

"No, no, no. One man does not have another in his power in this country,—not in that way; but then, you know, Mr. Palliser, it would hardly do to offend him; would it?"

"I would rather not offend him, as is natural. Indeed, I do not wish to offend any one."

"Exactly so; and least of all the duke, who has the whole property in his own hands. We may say the whole, for he can marry to-morrow if he pleases. And then his life is so good. I don't know a stouter man of his age, anywhere."

"I'm very glad to hear it."

"I'm sure you are, Mr. Palliser. But if he were to take offence, you know?"

"I should put up with it."

"Yes, exactly; that's what you would do. But it would be worth while to avoid it, seeing how much he has in his power."

"Has the duke sent you to me now, Mr. Fothergill?"

"No, no, no,—nothing of the sort. But he dropped words the other day which made me fancy that he was not quite,—quite,—quite at ease

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about you. I have long known that he would be very glad indeed to see an heir born to the property. The other morning,—I don't know whether there was anything in it,—but I fancied he was going to make some change in the present arrangements. He did not do it, and it might have been fancy. Only think, Mr. Palliser, what one word of his might do! If he says a word, he never goes back from it." Then, having said so much, Mr. Fothergill went his way.

Mr. Palliser understood the meaning of all this very well. It was not the first occasion on which Mr. Fothergill had given him advice,—advice such as Mr. Fothergill himself had no right to give him. He always received such counsel with an air of half-injured dignity, intending thereby to explain to Mr. Fothergill that he was intruding. But he knew well whence the advice came; and though, in all such cases, he had made up his mind not to follow such counsel, it had generally come to pass that Mr. Palliser's conduct had more or less accurately conformed itself to Mr. Fothergill's advice. A word from the duke might certainly do a great deal! Mr. Palliser resolved that in that affair of Lady Dumbello he would follow his own devices. But, nevertheless, it was undoubtedly true that a word from the duke might do a great deal!

We, who are in the secret, know how far Mr. Palliser had already progressed in his iniquitous passion before he left Hartlebury. Others, who were perhaps not so well informed, gave him credit for a much more advanced success. Lady Clandidlem, in her letter to Lady De Courcy, written immediately after the departure of Mr. Palliser, declared that, having heard of that gentleman's intended matutinal departure, she had confidently expected to learn at the breakfast-table that Lady Dumbello had flown with him. From the tone of her ladyship's language, it seemed as though she had been robbed of an anticipated pleasure by Lady Dumbello's prolonged sojourn in the halls of her husband's ancestors. "I feel, however, quite convinced," said Lady Clandidlem, "that it cannot go on longer than the spring. I never yet saw a man so infatuated as Mr. Palliser. He did not leave her for one moment all the time he was here. No one but Lady Hartletop would have permitted it. But, you know, there is nothing so pleasant as good old family friendships."

CHAPTER XLIV.

VALENTINE'S DAY AT ALLINGTON.

LILY had exacted a promise from her mother before her illness, and during the period of her convalescence often referred to it, reminding her mother that that promise had been made, and must be kept. Lily was to be told the day on which Crosbie was to be married. It had come to the

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knowledge of them all that the marriage was to take place in February. But this was not sufficient for Lily. She must know the day.

And as the time drew nearer,—Lily becoming stronger the while, and less subject to medical authority,—the marriage of Crosbie and Alexandrina was spoken of much more frequently at the Small House. It was not a subject which Mrs. Dale or Bell would have chosen for conversation; but Lily would refer to it. She would begin by doing so almost in a drolling strain, alluding to herself as a forlorn damsel in a play-book; and then she would go on to speak of his interests as a matter which was still of great moment to her. But in the course of such talking she would too often break down, showing by some sad word or melancholy tone how great was the burden on her heart. Mrs. Dale and Bell would willingly have avoided the subject, but Lily would not have it avoided. For them it was a very difficult matter on which to speak in her hearing. It was not permitted to them to say a word of abuse against Crosbie, as to whom they thought that no word of condemnation could be sufficiently severe; and they were forced to listen to such excuses for his conduct as Lily chose to manufacture, never daring to point out how vain those excuses were.

Indeed, in those days Lily reigned as a queen at the Small House. Ill-usage and illness together falling into her hands had given her such power, that none of the other women were able to withstand it. Nothing was said about it; but it was understood by them all, Jane and the cook included, that Lily was for the time paramount. She was a dear, gracious, loving, brave queen, and no one was anxious to rebel;—only that those praises of Crosbie were so very bitter in the ears of her subjects. The day was named soon enough, and the tidings came down to Allington. On the fourteenth of February, Crosbie was to be made a happy man. This was not known to the Dales till the twelfth, and they would willingly have spared the knowledge then, had it been possible to spare it. But it was not so, and on that evening Lily was told.

During these days, Bell used to see her uncle daily. Her visits were made with the pretence of taking to him information as to Lily's health; but there was perhaps at the bottom of them a feeling that, as the family intended to leave the Small House at the end of March, it would be well to let the squire know that there was no enmity in their hearts against him. Nothing more had been said about their moving,—nothing, that is, from them to him. But the matter was going on, and he knew it. Dr. Crofts was already in treaty on their behalf for a small furnished house at Guestwick. The squire was very sad about it,—very sad indeed. When Hopkins spoke to him on the subject, he sharply desired that faithful gardener to hold his tongue, giving it to be understood that such things were not to be made matter of talk by the Allington dependants till they had been officially announced. With Bell during these visits he never alluded to the matter. She was the chief sinner, in that she had refused to marry her cousin, and had declined even to listen to rational

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counsel upon the matter. But the squire felt that he could not discuss the subject with her, seeing that he had been specially informed by Mrs. Dale that his interference would not be permitted; and then he was perhaps aware that if he did discuss the subject with Bell, he would not gain much by such discussion. Their conversation, therefore, generally fell upon Crosbie, and the tone in which he was mentioned in the Great House was very different from that assumed in Lily's presence.

"He'll be a wretched man," said the squire, when he told Bell of the day that had been fixed.

"I don't want him to be wretched," said Bell. "But I can hardly think that he can act as he has done without being punished."

"He will be a wretched man. He gets no fortune with her, and she will expect everything that fortune can give. I believe, too, that she is older than he is. I cannot understand it. Upon my word, I cannot understand how a man can be such a knave and such a fool. Give my love to Lily. I'll see her to-morrow or the next day. She's well rid of him; I'm sure of that;—though I suppose it would not do to tell her so."

The morning of the fourteenth came upon them at the Small House as comes the morning of those special days which have been long considered, and which are to be long remembered. It brought with it a hard, bitter frost,—a black, biting frost,—such a frost as breaks the water-pipes, and binds the ground to the hardness of granite. Lily, queen as she was, had not yet been allowed to go back to her own chamber, but occupied the larger bed in her mother's room, her mother sleeping on a smaller one.

"Mamma," she said, "how cold they'll be!" Her mother had announced to her the fact of the black frost, and these were the first words she spoke.

"I fear their hearts will be cold also," said Mrs. Dale. She ought not to have said so. She was transgressing the acknowledged rule of the house in saying any word that could be construed as being inimical to Crosbie or his bride. But her feeling on the matter was too strong, and she could not restrain herself.

"Why should their hearts be cold? Oh, mamma, that is a terrible thing to say. Why should their hearts be cold?"

"I hope it may not be so."

"Of course you do; of course we all hope it. He was not cold-hearted, at any rate. A man is not cold-hearted, because he does not know himself. Mamma, I want you to wish for their happiness."

Mrs. Dale was silent for a minute or two before she answered this, but then she did answer it. "I think I do," said she. "I think I do wish for it."

"I am very sure that I do," said Lily.

At this time Lily had her breakfast upstairs, but went down into the drawing-room in the course of the morning.

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"You must be very careful in wrapping yourself as you go downstairs," said Bell, who stood by the tray on which she had brought up the toast and tea. "The cold is what you would call awful."

"I should call it jolly," said Lily, "if I could get up and go out. Do you remember lecturing me about talking slang the day that he first came?"

"Did I, my pet?"

"Don't you remember, when I called him a swell? Ah, dear! so he was. That was the mistake, and it was all my own fault, as I had seen it from the first."

Bell for a moment turned her face away, and beat with her foot against the ground. Her anger was more difficult of restraint than was even her mother's,—and now, not restraining it, but wishing to hide it, she gave it vent in this way.

"I understand, Bell. I know what your foot means when it goes in that way; and you shan't do it. Come here, Bell, and let me teach you Christianity. I'm a fine sort of teacher, am I not? And I did not quite mean that."

"I wish I could learn it from some one," said Bell. "There are circumstances in which what we call Christianity seems to me to be hardly possible."

"When your foot goes in that way it is a very unchristian foot, and you ought to keep it still. It means anger against him, because he discovered before it was too late that he would not be happy,—that is, that he and I would not be happy together if we were married."

"Don't scrutinize my foot too closely, Lily."

"But your foot must bear scrutiny, and your eyes, and your voice. He was very foolish to fall in love with me. And so was I very foolish to let him love me, at a moment's notice,—without a thought as it were. I was so proud of having him, that I gave myself up to him all at once, without giving him a chance of thinking of it. In a week or two it was done. Who could expect that such an engagement should be lasting?"

"And why not? That is nonsense, Lily. But we will not talk about it."

"Ah, but I want to talk about it. It was as I have said, and if so, you shouldn't hate him because he did the only thing which he honestly could do when he found out his mistake."

"What; become engaged again within a week!"

"There had been a very old friendship, Bell; you must remember that. But I was speaking of his conduct to me, and not of his conduct to ——" And then she remembered that that other lady might at this very moment possess the name which she had once been so proud to think that she would bear herself. "Bell," she said, stopping her other speech suddenly, "at what o'clock do people get married in London?"

"Oh, at all manner of hours,—any time before twelve. They will be fashionable, and will be married late."

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"You don't think she's Mrs. Crosbie yet, then?"

"Lady Alexandrina Crosbie," said Bell, shuddering.

"Yes, of course; I forgot. I should so like to see her. I feel such an interest about her. I wonder what coloured hair she has. I suppose she is a sort of Juno of a woman,—very tall and handsome. I'm sure she has not got a pug-nose like me. Do you know what I should really like, only of course it's not possible;—to be godmother to his first child."

"Oh, Lily!"

"I should. Don't you hear me say that I know it's not possible? I'm not going up to London to ask her. She'll have all manner of grandees for her godfathers and godmothers. I wonder what those grand people are really like."

"I don't think there's any difference. Look at Lady Julia."

"Oh, she's not a grand person. It isn't merely having a title. Don't you remember that he told us that Mr. Palliser is about the grandest grandee of them all. I suppose people do learn to like them. He always used to say that he had been so long among people of that sort, that it would be very difficult for him to divide himself off from them. I should never have done for that kind of thing; should I?"

"There is nothing I despise so much as what you call that kind of thing."

"Do you? I don't. After all, think how much work they do. He used to tell me of that. They have all the governing in their hands, and get very little money for doing it."

"Worse luck for the country."

"The country seems to do pretty well. But you're a radical, Bell. My belief is, you wouldn't be a lady if you could help it."

"I'd sooner be an honest woman."

"And so you are,—my own dear, dearest, honest Bell,—and the fairest lady that I know. If I were a man, Bell, you are just the girl that I should worship."

"But you are not a man; so it's no good."

"But you mustn't let your foot go astray in that way; you mustn't, indeed. Somebody said, that whatever is, is right, and I declare I believe it."

"I'm sometimes inclined to think, that whatever is, is wrong."

"That's because you're a radical. I think I'll get up now, Bell; only it's so frightfully cold that I'm afraid."

"There's a beautiful fire," said Bell.

"Yes; I see. But the fire won't go all around me, like the bed does. I wish I could know the very moment when they're at the altar. It's only half-past ten yet."

"I shouldn't be at all surprised if it's over."

"Over! What a word that is! A thing like that is over, and then all the world cannot put it back again. What if he should be unhappy after all?"

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"He must take his chance," said Bell, thinking within her own mind that that chance would be a very bad one.

"Of course he must take his chance. Well,—I'll get up now." And then she took her first step out into the cold world beyond her bed. "We must all take our chance. I have made up my mind that it will be at half-past eleven."

When half-past eleven came, she was seated in a large easy-chair over the drawing-room fire, with a little table by her side, on which a novel was lying. She had not opened her book that morning, and had been sitting for some time perfectly silent, with her eyes closed, and her watch in her hand.

"Mamma," she said at last, "it is over now, I'm sure."

"What is over, my dear?"

"He has made that lady his wife. I hope God will bless them, and I pray that they may be happy." As she spoke these words, there was an unwonted solemnity in her tone which startled Mrs. Dale and Bell.

"I also will hope so," said Mrs. Dale. "And now, Lily, will it not be well that you should turn your mind away from the subject, and endeavour to think of other things?"

"But I can't, mamma. It is so easy to say that; but people can't choose their own thoughts."

"They can usually direct them as they will, if they make the effort."

"But I can't make the effort. Indeed, I don't know why I should. It seems natural to me to think about him, and I don't suppose it can be very wrong. When you have had so deep an interest in a person, you can't drop him all of a sudden." Then there was again silence, and after a while Lily took up her novel. She made that effort of which her mother had spoken, but she made it altogether in vain. "I declare, Bell," she said, "it's the greatest rubbish I ever attempted to read." This was specially ungrateful, because Bell had recommended the book. "All the books have got to be so stupid! I think I'll read Pilgrim's Progress again."

"What do you say to Robinson Crusoe?" said Bell.

"Or Paul and Virginia?" said Lily. "But I believe I'll have Pilgrim's Progress. I never can understand it, but I rather think that makes it nicer."

"I hate books I can't understand," said Bell. "I like a book to be clear as running water, so that the whole meaning may be seen at once."

"The quick seeing of the meaning must depend a little on the reader, must it not?" said Mrs. Dale.

"The reader mustn't be a fool, of course," said Bell.

"But then so many readers are fools," said Lily. "And yet they get something out of their reading. Mrs. Crump is always poring over the Revelations, and nearly knows them by heart. I don't think she could

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interpret a single image, but she has a hazy, misty idea of the truth. That's why she likes it,—because it's too beautiful to be understood; and that's why I like Pilgrim's Progress." After which Bell offered to get the book in question.

"No, not now," said Lily. "I'll go on with this, as you say it's so grand. The personages are always in their tantrums, and go on as though they were mad. Mamma, do you know where they're going for the honeymoon?"

"No, my dear."

"He used to talk to me about going to the lakes." And then there was another pause, during which Bell observed that her mother's face became clouded with anxiety. "But I won't think of it any more," continued Lily; "I will fix my mind to something." And then she got up from her chair. "I don't think it would have been so difficult if I had not been ill?"

"Of course it would not, my darling."

"And I'm going to be well again now, immediately. Let me see: I was told to read Carlyle's History of the French Revolution, and I think I'll begin now." It was Crosbie who had told her to read the book, as both Bell and Mrs. Dale were well aware. "But I must put it off till I can get it down from the other house."

"Jane shall fetch it if you really want it," said Mrs. Dale.

"Bell shall get it, when she goes up in the afternoon; will you, Bell? And I'll try to get on with this stuff in the meantime." Then again she sat with her eyes fixed upon the pages of the book. "I'll tell you what, mamma,—you may have some comfort in this: that when to-day's gone by, I shan't make a fuss about any other day."

"Nobody thinks that you are making a fuss, Lily."

"Yes, but I am. Isn't it odd, Bell, that it should take place on Valentine's day? I wonder whether it was so settled on purpose, because of the day. Oh, dear, I used to think so often of the letter that I should get from him on this day, when he would tell me that I was his valentine. Well; he's got another—valen—tine—now." So much she said with articulate voice, and then she broke down, bursting out into convulsive sobs, and crying in her mother's arms as though she would break her heart. And yet her heart was not broken, and she was still strong in that resolve which she had made, that her grief should not overpower her. As she had herself said, the thing would not have been so difficult, had she not been weakened by illness.

"Lily, my darling; my poor, ill-used darling."

"No, mamma, I won't be that." And she struggled grievously to get the better of the hysterical attack which had overpowered her. "I won't be regarded as ill-used; not as specially ill-used. But I am your darling, your own darling. Only I wish you'd beat me and thump me when I'm such a fool, instead of pitying me. It's a great mistake being soft to people when they make fools of themselves. There, Bell; there's

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your stupid book, and I won't have any more of it. I believe it was that that did it." And she pushed the book away from her.

After this little scene she said no further word about Crosbie and his bride on that day, but turned the conversation towards the prospect of their new house at Guestwick.

"It will be a great comfort to be nearer Dr. Crofts; won't it, Bell?"

"I don't know," said Bell.

"Because if we are ill, he won't have such a terrible distance to come?"

"That will be a comfort for him, I should think," said Bell, very demurely.

In the evening the first volume of the French Revolution had been procured, and Lily stuck to her reading with laudable perseverance; till at eight her mother insisted on her going to bed, queen as she was.

"I don't believe a bit, you know, that the king was such a bad man as that," she said.

"I do," said Bell.

"Ah, that's because you're a radical. I never will believe that kings are so much worse than other people. As for Charles the First, he was about the best man in history."

This was an old subject of dispute; but Lily on the present occasion was allowed her own way,—as being an invalid.

CHAPTER XLV.

Valentine's Day in London.

The fourteenth of February in London was quite as black, and cold, and as wintersome as it was at Allington, and was, perhaps, somewhat more melancholy in its coldness. Nevertheless Lady Alexandrina De Courcy looked as bright as bridal finery could make her, when she got out of her carriage and walked into St. James's church at eleven o'clock on that morning.

It had been finally arranged that the marriage should take place in London. There were certainly many reasons which would have made a marriage from Courcy Castle more convenient. The De Courcy family were all assembled at their country family residence, and could therefore have been present at the ceremony without cost or trouble. The castle too was warm with the warmth of life, and the pleasantness of home would have lent a grace to the departure of one of the daughters of the house. The retainers and servants were there, and something of the rich mellowness of a noble alliance might have been felt, at any rate by Crosbie, at a marriage so celebrated. And it must have been acknowledged, even by Lady De Courcy, that the house in Portman Square was very cold,—that a marriage from thence would be cold,—that there could be no hope of

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attaching to it any honour and glory, or of making it resound with fashionable éclat in the columns of the *Morning Post*. But then, had they been married in the country, the earl would have been there; whereas there was no probability of his travelling up to London for the purpose of being present on such an occasion.

The earl was very terrible in these days, and Alexandrina, as she became confidential in her communications with her future husband, spoke of him as of an ogre, who could not by any means be avoided in all the concerns of life, but whom one might shun now and again by some subtle device and careful arrangement of favourable circumstances. Crosbie had more than once taken upon himself to hint that he did not specially regard the ogre, seeing that for the future he could keep himself altogether apart from the malicious monster's dominions.

"He will not come to me in our new home," he had said to his love, with some little touch of affection. But to this view of the case Lady Alexandrina had demurred. The ogre in question was not only her parent, but was also a noble peer, and she could not agree to any arrangement by which their future connection with the earl, and with nobility in general, might be endangered. Her parent, doubtless, was an ogre, and in his ogreship could make himself very terrible to those near him; but then might it not be better for them to be near to an earl who was an ogre, than not to be near to any earl at all? She had therefore signified to Crosbie that the ogre must be endured.

But, nevertheless, it was a great thing to be rid of him on that happy occasion. He would have said very dreadful things,—things so dreadful that there might have been a question whether the bridegroom could have borne them. Since he had heard of Crosbie's accident at the railway station, he had constantly talked with fiendish glee of the beating which had been administered to his son-in-law. Lady De Courcy in taking Crosbie's part, and maintaining that the match was fitting for her daughter, had ventured to declare before her husband that Crosbie was a man of fashion, and the earl would now ask, with a loathsome grin, whether the bridegroom's fashion had been improved by his little adventure at Paddington. Crosbie, to whom all this was not repeated, would have preferred a wedding in the country. But the countess and Lady Alexandrina knew better.

The earl had strictly interdicted any expenditure, and the countess had of necessity construed this as forbidding any unnecessary expense. "To marry a girl without any immediate cost was a thing which nobody could understand," as the countess remarked to her eldest daughter.

"I would really spend as little as possible," Lady Amelia had answered. "You see, mamma, there are circumstances about it which one doesn't wish to have talked about just at present. There's the story of that girl,—and then that fracas at the station. I really think it ought to be as quiet as possible." The good sense of Lady Amelia was not to be disputed, as her mother acknowledged. But then if the marriage

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were managed in any notoriously quiet way, the very notoriety of that quiet would be as dangerous as an attempt at loud glory. "But it won't cost as much," said Amelia. And thus it had been resolved that the wedding should be very quiet.

To this Crosbie had assented very willingly, though he had not relished the manner in which the countess had explained to him her views.

"I need not tell you, Adolphus," she had said, "how thoroughly satisfied I am with this marriage. My dear girl feels that she can be happy as your wife, and what more can I want? I declared to her and to Amelia that I was not ambitious, for their sakes, and have allowed them both to please themselves."

"I hope they have pleased themselves," said Crosbie.

"I trust so; but nevertheless,—I don't know whether I make myself understood?"

"Quite so, Lady De Courcy. If Alexandrina were going to marry the eldest son of a marquis, you would have a longer procession to church than will be necessary when she marries me."

"You put it in such an odd way, Adolphus."

"It's all right so long as we understand each other. I can assure you I don't want any procession at all. I should be quite contented to go down with Alexandrina, arm in arm, like Darby and Joan, and let the clerk give her away."

We may say that he would have been much better contented could he have been allowed to go down the street without any encumbrance on his arm. But there was no possibility now for such deliverance as that.

Both Lady Amelia and Mr. Gazebee had long since discovered the bitterness of his heart and the fact of his repentance, and Gazebee had ventured to suggest to his wife that his noble sister-in-law was preparing for herself a life of misery.

"He'll become quiet and happy when he's used to it," Lady Amelia had replied, thinking, perhaps, of her own experiences.

"I don't know, my dear; he's not a quiet man. There's something in his eye which tells me that he could be very hard to a woman."

"It has gone too far now for any change," Lady Amelia had answered.

"Well; perhaps it has."

"And I know my sister so well; she would not hear of it. I really think they will do very well when they become used to each other."

Mr. Gazebee, who also had had his own experiences, hardly dared to hope so much. His home had been satisfactory to him, because he had been a calculating man, and having made his calculation correctly was willing to take the net result. He had done so all his life with success. In his house his wife was paramount,—as he very well knew. But no effort on his wife's part, had she wished to make such effort, could have forced him to spend more than two-thirds of his income. Of this she also was aware, and had trimmed her sails accordingly, likening herself to

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him in this respect. But of such wisdom, and such trimmings, and such adaptability, what likelihood was there with Mr. Crosbie and Lady Alexandrina?

"At any rate, it is too late now," said Lady Amelia, thus concluding the conversation.

But, nevertheless, when the last moment came, there was some little attempt at glory. Who does not know the way in which a lately married couple's little dinner-party stretches itself out from the pure simplicity of a fried sole and a leg of mutton to the attempt at clear soup, the unfortunately cold dish of round balls which is handed about after the sole, and the brightly red jelly, and beautifully pink cream, which are ordered, in the last agony of ambition, from the next pastrycook's shop?

"We cannot give a dinner, my dear, with only cook and Sarah."

It has thus begun, and the husband has declared that he has no such idea. "If Phipps and Dowdney can come here and eat a bit of mutton, they are very welcome; if not, let them stay away. And you might as well ask Phipps's sister; just to have some one to go with you into the drawing-room."

"I'd much rather go alone, because then I can read,"—or sleep, we may say.

But her husband has explained that she would look friendless in this solitary state, and therefore Phipps's sister has been asked. Then the dinner has progressed, down to those costly jellies which have been ordered in a last agony. There has been a conviction on the minds of both of them that the simple leg of mutton would have been more jolly for them all. Had those round balls not been carried about by a hired man; had simple mutton with hot potatoes been handed to Miss Phipps by Sarah Miss Phipps would not have simpered with such unmeaning stiffness when young Dowdney spoke to her. They would have been much more jolly. "Have a bit more mutton, Phipps; and where do you like it?" How pleasant it sounds! But we all know that it is impossible. My young friend had intended this, but his dinner had run itself away to cold round balls and coloured forms from the pastrycook. And so it was with the Crosbie marriage.

The bride must leave the church in a properly appointed carriage, and the postboys must have wedding favours. So the thing grew; not into noble proportions, not into proportions of true glory, justifying the attempt and making good the gala. A well-cooked rissole, brought pleasantly to you, is good eating. A gala marriage, when everything is in keeping, is excellent sport. Heaven forbid that we should have no gala marriages. But the small spasmodic attempt, made in opposition to manifest propriety, made with an inner conviction of failure,—that surely should be avoided in marriages, in dinners, and in all affairs of life.

There were bridesmaids and there was a breakfast. Both Margaretta and Rosina came up to London for the occasion, as did also a first cousin of theirs, one Miss Gresham, a lady whose father lived in the same county.

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Mr. Gresham had married a sister of Lord De Courcy's, and his services were also called into requisition. He was brought up to give away the bride, because the earl,—as the paragraph in the newspaper declared,—was confined at Courcy Castle by his old hereditary enemy, the gout. A fourth bridesmaid also was procured, and thus there was a bevy, though not so large a bevy as is now generally thought to be desirable. There were only three or four carriages at the church, but even three or four were something. The weather was so frightfully cold that the light-coloured silks of the ladies carried with them a show of discomfort. Girls should be very young to look nice in light dresses on a frosty morning, and the bridesmaids at Lady Alexandrina's wedding were not very young. Lady Rosina's nose was decidedly red. Lady Margaretta was very wintry, and apparently very cross. Miss Gresham was dull, tame, and insipid; and the Honourable Miss O'Flaherty, who filled the fourth place, was sulky at finding that she had been invited to take a share in so very lame a performance.

But the marriage was made good, and Crosbie bore up against his misfortunes like a man. Montgomerie Dobbs and Fowler Pratt both stood by him, giving him, let us hope, some assurance that he was not absolutely deserted by all the world,—that he had not given himself up, bound hand and foot, to the De Courcys, to be dealt with in all matters as they might please. It was that feeling which had been so grievous to him,—and that other feeling, cognate to it, that if he should ultimately succeed in rebelling against the De Courcys, he would find himself a solitary man.

"Yes; I shall go," Fowler Pratt had said to Montgomerie Dobbs. "I always stick to a fellow if I can. Crosbie has behaved like a blackguard, and like a fool also; and he knows that I think so. But I don't see why I should drop him on that account. I shall go as he has asked me."

"So shall I," said Montgomerie Dobbs, who considered that he would be safe in doing whatever Fowler Pratt did, and who remarked to himself that after all Crosbie was marrying the daughter of an earl.

Then, after the marriage, came the breakfast, at which the countess presided with much noble magnificence. She had not gone to church, thinking, no doubt, that she would be better able to maintain her good humour at the feast, if she did not subject herself to the chance of lumbago in the church. At the foot of the table sat Mr. Gresham, her brother-in-law, who had undertaken to give the necessary toast and make the necessary speech. The Honourable John was there, saying all manner of ill-natured things about his sister and new brother-in-law, because he had been excluded from his proper position at the foot of the table. But Alexandrina had declared that she would not have the matter entrusted to her brother. The Honourable George would not come, because the countess had not asked his wife.

"Maria may be slow, and all that sort of thing," George had said;

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"but she is my wife. And she had got what they haven't. Love me, love my dog, you know." So he had stayed down at Courcy,—very properly as I think.

Alexandrina had wished to go away before breakfast, and Crosbie would not have cared how early an escape had been provided for him; but the countess had told her daughter that if she would not wait for the breakfast, there should be no breakfast at all, and in fact no wedding; nothing but a simple marriage. Had there been a grand party, that going away of the bride and bridegroom might be very well; but the countess felt that on such an occasion as this nothing but the presence of the body of the sacrifice could give any reality to the festivity. So Crosbie and Lady Alexandrina Crosbie heard Mr. Gresham's speech, in which he prophesied for the young couple an amount of happiness and prosperity almost greater than is compatible with the circumstances of humanity. His young friend Crosbie, whose acquaintance he had been delighted to make, was well known as one of the rising pillars of the State. Whether his future career might be parliamentary, or devoted to the permanent Civil Service of the country, it would be alike great, noble, and prosperous. As to his dear niece, who was now filling that position in life which was most beautiful and glorious for a young woman,—she could not have done better. She had preferred genius to wealth,—so said Mr. Gresham,—and she would find her fitting reward. As to her finding her fitting reward, whatever her preferences may have been, there Mr. Gresham was no doubt quite right. On that head I myself have no doubt whatever. After that, Crosbie returned thanks, making a much better speech than nine men do out of ten on such occasions, and then the thing was over. No other speaking was allowed, and within half an hour from that time, he and his bride were in the post-chaise, being carried away to the Folkestone railway station; for that place had been chosen as the scene of their honeymoon. It had been at one time intended that the journey to Folkestone should be made simply as the first stage to Paris, but Paris and all foreign travelling had been given up by degrees.

"I don't care a bit about France,—we have been there so often," Alexandrina said.

She had wished to be taken to Naples, but Crosbie had made her understand at the first whispering of the word, that Naples was quite out of the question. He must look now in all things to money. From the very first outset of his career he must save a shilling wherever a shilling could be saved. To this view of life no opposition was made by the De Courcy interest. Lady Amelia had explained to her sister that they ought so to do their honeymooning that it should not cost more than if they began keeping house at once. Certain things must be done which, no doubt, were costly in their nature. The bride must take with her a well-dressed lady's-maid. The rooms at the Folkestone hotel must be large, and on the first floor. A carriage must be hired for her use while she remained; but every shilling must be saved the spending of which

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would not make itself apparent to the outer world. Oh, deliver us from the poverty of those who, with small means, affect a show of wealth! There is no whitening equal to that of sepulchres whited as they are whited!

By the proper administration of a slight bribe Crosbie secured for himself and his wife a compartment in the railway carriage to themselves. And as he seated himself opposite to Alexandrina, having properly tucked her up with all her bright-coloured trappings, he remembered that he had never in truth been alone with her before. He had danced with her frequently, and been left with her for a few minutes between the figures. He had flirted with her in crowded drawing-rooms, and had once found a moment at Courcy Castle to tell her that he was willing to marry her in spite of his engagement with Lilian Dale. But he had never walked with her for hours together as he had walked with Lily. He had never talked to her about government, and politics, and books; nor had she talked to him of poetry, of religion, and of the little duties and comforts of life. He had known the Lady Alexandrina for the last six or seven years; but he had never known her,—perhaps never would know her,—as he had learned to know Lily Dale within the space of two months.

And now that she was his wife, what was he to say to her? They two had commenced a partnership which was to make of them for the remaining term of their lives one body and one flesh. They were to be all-in-all to each other. But how was he to begin this all-in-all partnership? Had the priest, with his blessing, done it so sufficiently that no other doing on Crosbie's own part was necessary? There she was, opposite to him, his very actual wife,—bone of his bone; and what was he to say to her? As he settled himself on his seat, taking over his own knees a part of a fine fur rug trimmed with scarlet, with which he had covered her other mufflings, he bethought himself how much easier it would have been to talk to Lily. And Lily would have been ready with all her ears, and all her mind, and all her wit, to enter quickly upon whatever thoughts had occurred to him. In that respect Lily would have been a wife indeed, —a wife that would have transferred herself with quick mental activity into her husband's mental sphere. Had he begun about his office Lily would have been ready for him, but Alexandrina had never yet asked him a single question about his official life. Had he been prepared with a plan for to-morrow's happiness Lily would have taken it up eagerly, but Alexandrina never cared for such trifles.

"Are you quite comfortable?" he said, at last.

"Oh, yes, quite, thank you. By-the-by, what did you do with my dressing-case?"

And that question she did ask with some energy.

"It is under you. You can have it as foot-stool if you like it."

"Oh, no; I should scratch it. I was afraid that if Hannah had it, it might be lost." Then again there was silence, and Crosbie again considered as to what he would next say to his wife.

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We all know the advice given us of old as to what we should do under such circumstances; and who can be so thoroughly justified in following that advice as a newly-married husband? So he put out his hand for hers and drew her closer to him.

"Take care of my bonnet," she said, as she felt the motion of the railway carriage when he kissed her. I don't think he kissed her again till he had landed her and her bonnet safely at Folkestone. How often would he have kissed Lily, and how pretty would her bonnet have been when she reached the end of her journey, and how delightfully happy would she have looked when she scolded him for bending it! But Alexandrina was quite in earnest about her bonnet; by far too much in earnest for any appearance of happiness.

So he sat without speaking, till the train came to the tunnel.

"I do so hate tunnels," said Alexandrina.

He had half intended to put out his hand again, under some mistaken idea that the tunnel afforded him an opportunity. The whole journey was one long opportunity, had he desired it; but his wife hated tunnels, and so he drew his hand back again. Lily's little fingers would have been ready for his touch. He thought of this, and could not help thinking of it.

He had *The Times* newspaper in his dressing-bag. She also had a novel with her. Would she be offended if he took out the paper and read it? The miles seemed to pass by very slowly, and there was still another hour down to Folkestone. He longed for his *Times*, but resolved at last, that he would not read unless she read first. She also had remembered her novel; but by nature she was more patient than he, and she thought that on such a journey any reading might perhaps be almost improper. So she sat tranquilly, with her eyes fixed on the netting over her husband's head.

At last he could stand it no longer, and he dashed off into a conversation, intended to be most affectionate and serious.

"Alexandrina," he said, and his voice was well-tuned for the tender serious manner, had her ears been alive to such tuning. "Alexandrina, this is a very important step that you and I have taken to-day."

"Yes; it is, indeed," said she.

"I trust we shall succeed in making each other happy."

"Yes; I hope we shall."

"If we both think seriously of it, and remember that that is our chief duty, we shall do so."

"Yes; I suppose we shall. I only hope we shan't find the house very cold. It is so new, and I am so subject to colds in my head. Amelia says we shall find it very cold; but then she was always against our going there."

"The house will do very well," said Crosbie. And Alexandrina could perceive that there was something of the master in his tone as he spoke.

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"I am only telling you what Amelia said," she replied.

Had Lily been his bride, and had he spoken to her of their future life and mutual duties, how she would have kindled to the theme! She would have knelt at his feet on the floor of the carriage, and, looking up into his face, would have promised him to do her best,—her best,—her very best. And with what an eagerness of inward resolution would she have determined to keep her promise. He thought of all this now, but he knew that he ought not to think of it. Then, for some quarter of an hour, he did take out his newspaper, and she, when she saw him do so, did take out her novel.

He took out his newspaper, but he could not fix his mind upon the politics of the day. Had he not made a terrible mistake? Of what use to him in life would be that thing of a woman that sat opposite to him? Had not a great punishment come upon him, and had he not deserved the punishment? In truth, a great punishment had come upon him. It was not only that he had married a woman incapable of understanding the higher duties of married life, but that he himself would have been capable of appreciating the value of a woman who did understand them. He would have been happy with Lily Dale; and therefore we may surmise that his unhappiness with Lady Alexandrina would be the greater. There are men who, in marrying such as Lady Alexandrina De Courcy, would get the article best suited to them, as Mortimer Gazebee had done in marrying her sister. Miss Griselda Grantly, who had become Lady Dumbello, though somewhat colder and somewhat cleverer than Lady Alexandrina, had been of the same sort. But in marrying her Lord Dumbello had got the article best suited to him;—if only the ill-natured world would allow him to keep the article. It was in this that Crosbie's failure had been so grievous,—that he had seen and approved the better course, but had chosen for himself to walk in that which was worse. During that week at Courcy Castle,—the week which he passed there immediately after his second visit to Allington,—he had deliberately made up his mind that he was more fit for the bad course than for the good one. The course was now before him, and he had no choice but to walk in it.

It was very cold when they got to Folkestone, and Lady Alexandrina shivered as she stepped into the private-looking carriage which had been sent to the station for her use.

"We shall find a good fire in the parlour at the hotel," said Crosbie.

"Oh, I hope so," said Alexandrina, "and in the bedroom too."

The young husband felt himself to be offended, but he hardly knew why. He felt himself to be offended, and with difficulty induced himself to go through all those little ceremonies the absence of which would have been remarked by everybody. He did his work, however, seeing to all her shawls and wrappings, speaking with good-nature to Hannah, and paying special attention to the dressing-case.

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"What time would you like to dine?" he asked, as he prepared to leave her alone with Hannah in the bedroom.

"Whenever you please; only I should like some tea and bread-and-butter presently."

Crosbie went into the sitting-room, ordered the tea and bread-and-butter, ordered also the dinner, and then stood himself up with his back to the fire, in order that he might think a little of his future career.

He was a man who had long since resolved that his life should be a success. It would seem that all men would so resolve, if the matter were simply one of resolution. But the majority of men, as I take it, make no such resolution, and very many men resolve that they will be unsuccessful. Crosbie, however, had resolved on success, and had done much towards carrying out his purpose. He had made a name for himself, and had acquired a certain fame. That, however, was, as he acknowledged to himself, departing from him. He looked the matter straight in the face, and told himself that his fashion must be abandoned; but the office remained to him. He might still rule over Mr. Optimist, and make a subservient slave of Butterwell. That must be his line in life now, and to that line he would endeavour to be true. As to his wife and his home, —he would look to them for his breakfast, and perhaps his dinner. He would have a comfortable arm-chair, and if Alexandrina should become a mother, he would endeavour to love his children; but above all things he would never think of Lily. After that he stood and thought of her for half an hour.

"If you please, sir, my lady wants to know at what time you have ordered dinner."

"At seven, Hannah."

"My lady says she is very tired, and will lay down till dinner-time."

"Very well, Hannah. I will go into her room when it is time to dress. I hope they are making you comfortable downstairs?"

Then Crosbie strolled out on the pier in the dusk of the cold winter evening.

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A Scotchman in Holland.

A PORTMANTEAU and a small black bag for the cab, a cigar-case and Didot's charming little *Horace* for the pocket, were the simple preparations with which, one day last August, I left my house in Edinburgh to join at Leith the steamer bound for Rotterdam. Starting from the South Side, the cab rolled past the college, a dingy building with no dignity but that of size, and cooped up amidst streets none of them splendid and some of them mean. A few minutes gave us a glimpse of Edinburgh's real interest—the tall, quaint, continental-looking houses of the Canongate; and, that crossed, one minute more revealed its real beauty—the gardened valley which divides the Old from the New Town. I bade adieu to the distant Castle standing out on the left with a majesty which no neglect can destroy—a perpetual reminder of the feudalism to which we Scots owe our best poetry and proudest recollections. Before long, the cab was in the narrow busy streets of Leith, after a tedious rattle through which, the harbour burst upon us with all its stir of shipping, flutter of flags, and fresh sea-breeze, and soon the steamer welcomed me aboard, and I felt that my holiday had really begun. The *Osborne* hauled out of the docks in the customary fashion, which always seems so tardy and unintelligible to landsmen, and then turned her nose eastward, and plied steadily down the Firth of Forth. This is the point of view from which to see the Scottish capital, if you wish to seize its dignity as a whole. A stranger who knew nothing of it would feel, from the Firth, that it *must* be historical; and if he had visited Athens would at once recognize the likeness which has given it in modern times a half-sportive second name. The Castle for an Acropolis—the distant Pentlands for Hymettus—the raised position of the whole city (the ancient back-bone of which is the ridge planted with spires that slopes from the Castle down to Holyrood)—are points of resemblance sufficient, at least, to excuse Edinburgh for accepting this appellation. The modern ruin on the Calton Hill gives a fillip to the illusion, which deepens as you recede. The Firth on this afternoon was charming, and was enlivened by the presence of the Channel Fleet, which had arrived forty-eight hours before. There they lay, some miles distant from Leith, stretching in a line which seemed closer than it really was to the Fife shore. The sight was pleasant to all of us—to me, as an ex-naval man, pleasant and something more. Could I forget, indeed, as we gazed at them from the larboard quarter, while steaming away, the ward-room hospitalities of H.M.S. —— the night before? Nothing would be more ungrateful to my host, or to the jolly first lieutenant, who when the youngster of the watch reported that a party of visitors had been left on

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board, commanded an official detail to be made of "their number, and gender!" And had not I heard, too, at the same hospitable board, that capital story about the martinet, who, in his anxiety to make the whole ship clean and orderly, went so far as to *whitewash the goose!*

The social life of a steamer is a very different thing, as we all know, from that of a railway. In a steamer you make acquaintances, you chat with everybody, you hear people's histories, you pick up character. My fellow-passengers on this occasion were on the whole an agreeable company, and we lived together in friendly relations. There was an Edinburgh advocate of the better sort—for the profession has been sadly *plebified* since the days of Scott and Lockhart. There was a plucky little Canadian in mourning travelling by herself, and another lady in the same weeds (which always awaken one's interest) who had sailed with a consumptive husband for Australia and buried him in going round the Cape of Good Hope. There was a commercial man who had just swinged a railway company for three thousand pounds on account of an accident. There was a good-natured Scotch sheriff, with a good-looking Scotch wife. There was a Free Kirk probationer; but—not to mention any more in detail—the gem of the company was one who gradually became recognized and spoken of as the Fat Gentleman. I don't think any of us knew his name. But he was fat, and he was a gentleman; and, somehow, he gradually acquired an ascendancy over us which seemed to come to him as naturally as his twenty stone. He first attracted attention as we were bowling past the Berwickshire coast in the evening by an elaborate account of the farming of the Borders, accompanied by concise, but conclusive, decisions on the characters of the landholders. When night came, and we were assembled in the cabin over a friendly tumbler, a serious passenger made some remarks on missionary work;—it suddenly appeared that the fat gentleman had been twelve years in China, and he soon settled *that* subject. In fact, his supremacy so rapidly developed that we meanly strove against each other for his personal notice. Fellows would glide away from the spot on which they were chatting with you, under various pretences, but in reality to court the fat gentleman, who was smoking on another part of the deck. He received our advances with an easy humour; and spoke of himself and his motives for visiting Holland with the openness which is so fascinating in a superior. "I don't want to see their monasteries," said he, in his fine corpulent manner,—and evidently believing that monasteries were as plentiful in Holland as in Portugal,—"I want to see their dairy-farming. I want to know how they pay their rents!"

Next day was Sunday, and passed over without divine service of any kind, and almost without incident. There was a rumour in the morning that the Free Kirk probationer meant to practise preaching on us; but a slight rolling of the vessel after breakfast disturbed his plans, and the fishes alone had the opportunity of knowing whether there was anything in him. At noon the *Oscar*, from Leith, after vainly attempting to pass

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us to windward, crossed our stern so near as to threaten a collision, and seriously damaged the patent log which was towing astern. This gave us something to talk about, and helped to while away the time till dinner. We turned in at night with extra contentment, knowing that morning would find us off the coast of the Low Countries. There were four of us in each cabin; but the weather admitted of the bull's eye being open, and I got to sleep in spite of the thud, thud, thud of the screw. What I hate a screw for is that it lays hold of your attention by seeming to say something—and for a long time it continued saying—"On the poop!—on the poop!"—till my drowsy brain escaped from it.

Morning broke singularly fine; and when I got on deck, I found that we had crossed the bar, and were fairly in the Maas. At Helvoetsluys we entered the canal, and I gradually began to realize the fact that for the first time in my life I was in the country of William of Orange, Barneveldt, and De Wit; of Tromp and De Ruyter; of Erasmus and Grotius; of Rembrandt and Paul Potter; of Burman and Hemsterhuys. A distant view of Brill recalled the fact that old Martin Harpertz Tromp—Blake's great foe—was born there; and I remembered how he brought his convoy up Channel in February 1653, with Blake and Penn hammering at him. He gathered them together—the stout old seaman!—as a hen gathers her chickens, placed them inside a crescent formed by his men-of-war, and stood for home with a fair wind. The English made a dive every now and then, to snatch one of them, and played at snapdragon, Tromp supplying the fire. On looking round the landscape, and thinking of such men, one could not but feel that it is race and not scenery which determines human greatness. Our own Scotch highlands have produced an unimportant minority of the really memorable Scotsmen; and here was a country before me, noticeably "man-abounding," as Aristophanes says of Greece, and yet without either the majesty of grandeur or the beauty of romance. Not an ugly country, indeed—for there is a quiet charm about the Netherlands which I hope to reproduce as I go along; but still one that owes its attraction to what man has done for it. As you steam quietly up the canal, the banks of which are fringed with long rushes, a perfectly flat, rich, cheerful scene expands around you. There are frequent villages, each with its church-tower or spire, on all parts of the horizon—and each generally more or less clothed with wood. The various canals everywhere intersecting this plain are often lined with poplars and willows. The perpetual breeze turns innumerable windmills, which grind grain, or saw timber, or regulate the canals by preventing the water from accumulating too much at particular spots. Advancing through a prosperous busy life of this kind, you pass many dairy farms—farms which Englishmen are now beginning to bid for—and much rich pasture land dotted with groups of cattle. The last lock on the canal, before you join the Maas again, is at a village characteristically Dutch; that is to say, there is plenty of colour and homely ornament, and an independent quaint-

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ness about the shape and style of each house—as if each house were conscious that it was Dutch, and that Dutch independence had been too hard fought for not to be worth maintaining in every detail. Then there is the Dutch love of flowers visible, developing itself often in huge and brilliant hollyhocks, or "stick-roses," as the Hollanders call them. One welcomes, too, the national cleanliness, which has been the subject of so many jokes—though after living much in Scotland, one learns that dirt is no joking matter! While these hasty observations are made, the steamer gets through the lock, and emerges from the canal (which has cut off an important angle) out on the broad bright waters of the Maas. The Maas is here a stately and brilliant river—being, in fact, to speak genealogically, the child of the marriage of the Meuse with one of the co-heiresses of her ladyship the Rhine. The elder co-heiress preserves her dignity, and her maiden name, and passes through Leyden,—a reduced gentlewoman of high pedigree—(though, between ourselves, cutting no more figure than one of the better sort of canals) as the Rhine Proper. Up the Maas, accordingly, we continued to steam, till presently, a tall grey tower made itself visible over some distant trees. I did not know that this was the cathedral of St. Lawrence, and the fact is, that the city of which we were in quest took us by surprise. The river gave a sudden bend, and ROTTERDAM, with all its inhabitants, rose out of the wave. The city stood entirely on the left or north side of the river before us, with deep water up to its quay, and opposite, on the other side of the broad stream, an open rural country. The day was burning hot. The red houses, sparkling with various colours—the shops proclaiming their description in large gilt letters—were all glittering in a vivid sun. The long line of trees giving the name of Boompjes to this fine street on the Maas—which is street, and boulevard, and quay all in one—had an air of refreshing coolness. We all landed in hilarious spirits, and the Fat Gentleman especially was good enough to signalize his first appearance in Holland by an act of friendly and condescending playfulness to a native. He had accosted the Dutchman in English, and when the honest soul proved so benighted as only to know his proper tongue, our fat friend pardoned him playfully, "Ah, Johnny, you no *sabby*, eh, Johnny?" he said—just as he might have indulged the local ignorance of a coolie at Canton! The Fat Gentleman had indeed resided for some years in China.

Having left my traps at the New Bath Hotel, and ascertained the hour of the *table d'hôte*, I strolled out to see the town,—with that comfortable feeling that the country one had left less than forty-eight hours before was removed from one by an infinite distance, which is the peculiar and perhaps the most beneficial result of travel. Dutch Indiamen were loading and unloading at the Boompjes,—the long range of which, full of good houses, looked comfortably picturesque. In one of these houses, Peter Bayle, of the *Dictionary*, died; having corrected a "proof,"—the indefatigable man!—that very morning,—just before Death—inspecting *his* proof,—put his *dele* on the name of Peter. But a greater name than

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Bayle dominates Rotterdam; and I soon began to penetrate the city in search of the statue of Erasmus. There were, of course, a score of things to look at by the way, and before I had reached the Market Place, I had enjoyed some of the peculiarities of a Dutch town. The piquancy of a water life going on *inside* a town life, is, of course, the crowning novelty to a stranger. The canals run through the body of the city, like veins in the human body, and their green blood gives it a strange animation. Masts rise beside the trees by which the canals are lined,—opposite windows, with outside shutters of green,—or lined with flowers,—belonging to houses in which the prevailing red is varied by different shades of that warm colour, and by artful zebra-like stripes of white, which seem always to be kept clean and fresh. Outside every window are little mirrors, which present to the person sitting inside the whole line of the street, and into which the Dutch ladies look, as they sit plying their needles, with the constancy of the Lady of Shalott. Barges of many colours push steadily along the canals,—a green cord of weed gathering lightly round their bluff bows, as the long pole used steadily from forward to aft sends them gliding along. The white bridges open heavily to let the constant traffic pass, and no sooner do they close again, than carts, and trucks, and hand-barrows go rattling over them. Everybody is busy; yet so much of the heavy work is done on the water that even a commercial city like Rotterdam—the second city of the kingdom—is comparatively free from noise. If a private carriage passes, it will strike you at once, as either made in England, or in imitation of English models. The rich Rotterdam merchant is very much like an Englishman, of the same class, in his tastes. He belongs to a local yacht club, drives a good turn-out, and gives heavy dinners.

But, while looking about me in this way, and after passing fruit-shops where the melons look blooming—and cigar-shops where the cigars are both good and cheap—and cheese-shops with cheeses as round as the cannon-balls of Admiral Tromp—and after noticing that a painted pole does not indicate a barber's but a provision store, and that the barber makes his presence known by hanging out three basins—pawnbroker's fashion—I have gradually advanced to the Great Market. This spot hardly deserves its name, though as you enter it from the eastern corner an irregular line of old gabled houses seems to wind round you with something of an antique charm. The market is held on a large bridge which crosses a canal, and there—with the booths of the market people at his feet, surrounded by a seedy iron rail—stands a rusty bronze figure in cap and gown, holding in his hands a book. I knew him at once, and as Hood says,—

> To the great ERASMUS
> I offered my salaam.

I knew him, I say, not merely from the inscription in somewhat indifferent Latin on his pedestal, but because the statue is so obviously modelled on the well-known portrait of Holbein. The powerful nose with

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its broad nostrils—the large firm mouth full of character and humour—at once recall the great man of letters of the Reformation, whose cheerful cock-crow of satire, with the fresh morning air of his good sense, frightened away so many of the ghosts of the Middle Ages. He comes to us so associated with the Latin language, and so much of his life was spent in England, Italy, Switzerland, and Germany, that we seldom think of him as a *Dutchman*. But he had essentially the sagacity and industry of a Hollander; and the broad, sly, unctuous Rabelaisian humour of the *Colloquia*, the *Encomium Moriæ*, and the *Ciceronianus*, is just the talent which one recognizes on the canvas of Jan Steen. The statue was put up in the seventeeth century, and I confess I liked the familiarity which seemed to be established between it and the urchins of the market. They all know the fine old fellow's name, and are ready to roar it out to a stranger; and though I detected a piece of tile lying on his book, I feel sure that it was projected in no iconoclastic spirit. Legends, not without poetry in them, have gathered round the statue. The people say that Erasmus turns over a leaf of his book when he hears the cathedral clock of St. Lawrence strike the midnight hour; and anciently (according to Menzel at all events), they added, that when he came to the last leaf the end of the world would be at hand. There may be a deep symbolism in this belief; for, after the world has turned over the last leaf of the Reformation, what will there be left for people to do?

In a small steep street to the north of the Great Market, sloping down to the cathedral, they show you the house in which Erasmus was born. The guide-books had told me it was a gin-shop, but I found that it had degenerated into an establishment for the sale of effervescing waters. It was freshly painted, and a woman stood at the door with a baby in her arms—perhaps another Erasmus?

Returning meditatively to my hotel to dinner, I saw a Dutchman cleaning a nag, and pouring water on him from a garden watering-pot. I wonder if he did it to make him grow?

The New Bath Hotel—where I was sufficiently comfortable, and found the people civil—was full of Britons, but of Britons on the wing. They alight at Rotterdam like a flight of wild ducks, but few stay to see Holland; they are off to Antwerp, to Cologne, and to Switzerland. Some of us who did stay sallied forth at night to observe the humours of the common people in the humbler streets of the town. Preparations were going on for their ancient fair or *kirmish;* and we crushed through noisy narrow lanes, on each side of which women were standing before charcoal fires, brandishing long ladles, and with wonderful rapidity making cakes. We also entered the dancing-saloons of the Dutch tar, and found Falck disporting himself with nymphs, of whom I shall only say, that they might sit admirably to any Dutch painter who wished to place a becoming Europa on Paul Potter's Bull. But there was nothing characteristic or sailor-like in the dance. The honest fellows did their polkas with as little *abandon* as their betters. There was infinitely less frolicsomeness—not to

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say disorder—than we should have seen at Gosport; and I doubt if Jack at Gosport would have acquiesced so philosophically in the stare of strangers, who had only come there to look at him.

Next day I went into a different sphere of observation. We Scots have a double existence on the Continent. We are Englishmen from one point of view; but in most countries there is something to remind us of our old special nationality. A sentimental Frenchman often warms to you as an *Ecossais*, though you have to forgive him for believing that the kilt is worn in Dumfriesshire. And in Presbyterian Holland there are two Scotch churches, of which that at Rotterdam has existed for two hundred years. I had brought letters to the present pastor, the Rev. Mr. B., whose "Scottish kindness" had kept warm in foreign air, and who placed himself at my disposal, without restraint. His church stands near the end of the Scotch Dyke—an ancient street, with houses of the Spanish time, still distinguishable in it—tall red houses, crowned with a triangular-shaped head-piece of white stones, the smallest of which forms the apex. The houses of this street, seen from the end, were distinctly leaning from the perpendicular; and they have long outlived the numerous Scotch population to which they owed their name. The present Scotch congregation is indeed rather of Scotch descent than Scotch proper; and, some time ago, the Dutch Government suppressed one of the pastorates. A pleasant trait of the old world is a collection of nearly a dozen portraits of the ministers who have held charges in the Scotch church, which are kept in the vestry-room. When the French revolutionists overran Holland, they prodded these portraits with bayonets—a feat that would not have been so easy to try on the Scotch Fusiliers! The church is a roomy and comfortable one; but, true to its national tradition, excludes the organ. Mr. Spurgeon preached in it, during his Dutch tour, and I heard a characteristic anecdote of him. He had been seeing Rotterdam, and observing the peculiarities of Dutch city life, and he turned the experience to account, *more suo*, in the pulpit. "Open the bridges," exclaimed he, "and let the sinners pass!"

Walking along the Scotch Dyke—or Schiedamsche Dyke, as it is now beginning to be called—you turn into the Hoogstraat, and so reach easily the cathedral of St. Lawrence. A market is still held in its precincts, and heaps of yellow cabbages rise round the base of the venerable pile. Of course one does not find in a Protestant, a Presbyterian cathedral, the opulent ornamentation, the artistic splendour, the sanctified luxuriousness of the edifices of the Roman Church. But the Presbyterianism of Holland has a stateliness which that of Scotland does not possess. Here, for instance, in St. Lawrence, an organ some eighty feet high towers up to the roof at the end of the building; and when its shapely and massive golden pipes pour out their deep flood of music, the flood carries away the "precentor," and drowns him as an overflowing river would drown a piping linnet. The congregation have the musical notes printed in their Psalm-books, and that noble music must, in the long run, elevate their

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conceptions of the actual meaning of the Psalms. Then, at Gouda, there is wonderful old painted glass; and in one church which I saw at Amsterdam, carving of the most beautiful antique kind on the pulpit stairs; and the monuments of the admirals are always noble. Under the flag-stones of all the chief churches lie their old families, the coats-of-arms having been carefully scraped away by French revolutionists, who took this mode of making up for having no coat-armour of their own. But, for the rest, the modern elements in a Dutch church are homely enough; plenty of clean whitewash on the pillars, a pulpit in some central position, pews of plain deal, rows of stout cane-bottomed chairs, and feet-warmers heated with charcoal. They are steady church-goers, the Netherlanders, but make themselves comfortable in church; not forgetting this world, while learning about another. The alms for the poor (and no nation is more liberal to the poor) are collected in the churches by means of long strong flexible wands, with velvet bags, like skull-caps, at the end of them. After observing these characteristic details, let the reader do as we did this afternoon, and ascend the gray square old tower of St. Lawrence. It is a matter of some three hundred and fifty steps. You emerge on a convenient landing-place. Rotterdam lies at your feet, and Holland is spread before and around you, a living map. To the northward, on a very clear day, even the spires of Amsterdam may be seen; and the eye ranges over the indistinct clusters which mark the whereabouts of Delft and the Hague. Turning to the eastward you see the bend which the Maas makes above Rotterdam, with probably a fleet of market-boats sailing in a long string for the villages on its banks. Everywhere there is a rich level country, willowy, watery, windmilly; patched here and there with small lakes, but bearing signs, on all hands, of a dominant industry, and of an ancient dominant human intelligence, which keeps nature in order, coaxes the rivers into serving its purposes, turns many a penny out of the winds, and successfully holds its own against the imperious Northern Sea. Look down from this parapet upon Rotterdam, placed like a triangle with the Maas for a base; its red roofs seeming to burn below you like a clear fire. How tranquilly the city reposes on its canals, with the Singel (*cingulum*) winding round it for a belt! Yet a north-west wind, for two successive tides, floods the town. What was a street yesterday, becomes a river; and you pass in a boat over the spot last occupied by your child's perambulator. Women scurry off, holding up their petticoats. Heavy gentlemen are carried into dry regions by porters. The doors and ground-floor windows are closed, secured, and made impregnable to wet, by processes founded on old experience; and the householder walks up-stairs and hails in his drawing-room a *terra firma!* No wonder that the Dutch are good water-engineers. The country is kept safe and sound, and comfortable, by dint of engineering, and a college for training the State engineers, who look after the dykes, exists at Delft.

The mention of Delft leads us naturally to that quaint historic old

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town, to which the railway takes you in a very short run from Rotterdam. The chief towns of Holland all lie at wonderfully convenient distances; and you pass in an insignificant portion of the day from cities full of one kind of interest to cities full of another—just as if Liverpool were within hail of Ely, or Oxford next door to Norwich. Thus, in the space of a cigar (which you may smoke anywhere but in the first-class, stations and all) Rotterdam with its 102,000 inhabitants, bustling thoroughfares, and East Indiamen, is forgotten; you have glided through Schiedam's smoke, you are loitering under the chestnut-trees of the tranquillest of canals in Delft the Silent, which holds the bones of William the Silent. Good old East Indian fogies from Java and Surinam spend their retirement in this town, which has witnessed some of the most important events in Netherlands history. I confess that my own first care was to pay a pilgrimage to the monument in the Old Church of Martin Harpertz Tromp. The Englishman who conquered him sleeps without a stone; but the Dutch have lavished a care on the monuments of their admirals which they have not shown to their statesmen, their authors, or their painters. As I entered the church, which has a quaint leaning-tower, the magnificent mass of white marble over the old seaman's grave came full in view at once. The afternoon sun was shining through the windows of the empty building—and a roll of sonorous music from the organ—for the organist happened to be practising—was an accident which gave a pleasing tone of solemnity to the visit. The admiral is lying at full length, with his head upon a ship's gun, in a massive repose like the sleep of an old lion; and below, in bas-relief, and around him in carved figures, are abundant symbols of the occupations of his stormy and valiant life. Just opposite this old church, and close to its trees, stands the *Prinsenhof*, now a barrack, where in July, 1584, William the Silent fell by the pistol-shot of Balthazar Gerard. The scene is perfectly to be realized. He was ascending the stair, which still exists, and you can place yourself in the corner, where his assassin stood. The marks of the pistol-bullets are on the wall. They have been fingered by starers, so that—as a Dutch artillery officer, with whom I had some talk on the spot, told me—they have grown with time. A dining-room of the great prince's close by is used as a place for the soldiers to do gymnastics in, and swings and poles occupy the spot where he led hand-in-hand to the board Louise de Coligny. His bones lie in the new church, where there is an imposing monument, —sombre with black marble, and glittering with rich heraldry and metallic ornaments—to his name. The house of Orange—the present chiefs of which descend from the Frisian branch—from the great Taciturn's brother, —are drawn to their graves in the church by eight black Frisian horses, and rest in the neighbourhood of the greatest man of their line. The direct succession of the house ended with our William III., the Taciturn's great-grandson, whose genius and energy came to him, not only from great men, but (as Temple points out) from great men who had married remarkable women. Temple thought William's mother the ablest woman

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he ever knew ;* and mentions a curious trait of the taste for elegant splendour which had come to her with her Stuart blood, that she never used anything—even a water-jug—that was not made of gold. Near the Prince of Orange's splendid but not altogether graceful tomb, a simple mural tablet records the burial-place of Grotius. Delft was his native city, and he could not have a stiller one to sleep in after his busy and harassed life, of study and politics, controversy, diplomacy, and exile.

From Delft to the Hague is twenty-four miles, and you soon find yourself in a very different scene. The Hague, too, has its great historical memories; but they are like old family jewels newly set in a light modern setting—gorgeous and gay. At the Hague, you have the stately walks and houses of a capital—something of the brilliance of a little Paris ; and for environs the charming wood from which the city takes its name, and which throws around it an air of sylvan poetry. The princes of the House of Orange do well to be buried at Delft; but the Hague is the best place in Holland for head-quarters while alive. The present king, however, prefers his palace of Loo, in Guelderland, where he enjoys sporting, and is removed from the too close observation of a gossipping public. They are gallant men, these princes of the House of Nassau; but their vigour expends itself now-a-days chiefly in the pursuit of pleasure. It is only lately that the king has become reconciled with his wife,—one of the most gifted and accomplished sovereign ladies of Europe. And it is no secret that his heir has had a *jeunesse orageuse.* To this may be attributed the fact that he has not yet made an alliance with one of the daughters of England,—if it be not also true that he is in love with a lady of an English noble family. It would be a heavy demand on the loyalty of the Dutch to ask them to consent to the marriage of their future king with a subject of any state. They are full of their history to their fingers' ends,—and all the more full of it, because their history is greater than their actual position,—like an ancient family that has come down in the world. And yet the House of Orange is wonderfully strong in the Netherlands, and has long triumphed at once over the old opposition of the States' party to the Stadtholders, and over the modern republican opposition to the monarchy. The Dutch not only venerate the family as mixed up with their history, but have a suspicion that without it they could not maintain their unity and independence. A Belgian's respect for King Leopold is based on gratitude to him for his personal services, joined with a pride in the high regard which he enjoys from other sovereigns. But a Dutchman's respect for King William is something apart from his opinion about King William himself. It is rooted in his nationality and domesticity as a Hollander. It is like the feeling which he has towards his son or his grandfather ; towards the streak of water which bounds his

* *Observations on the Netherlands.* By Sir William Temple. This is far his best book, though he is generally and unjustly estimated by his literary essays. The "Observations" is a text-book in the Netherlands at this moment.

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pleasure-ground and his flower-garden; towards the dykes and dunes that save him from the Northern Ocean. For, after all, the House of Orange has been to the Dutch against foreigners what dykes and dunes have been to them against the sea. Curiously, also, this monarchical feeling co-exists with an independent local feeling essentially republican in its origin and derivation. The historical feeling of affection for the monarchy did not seem to me to extend to the aristocracy of the country. The fact is that the old aristocracy of North and South Holland had waned before Temple's time; and the ancient families are still found, as they were then, in Friesland and Guelderland. The legal changes resulting from French occupation are breaking up the estates of the nobles. They show a tendency to withdraw from public life, and to cease to form part of the active society of the country; and when an aristocracy does this, finally, its practical extinction is only a question of time. The social democratic spirit, however—the levelling tendency, of which we hear so much from travellers in America—is not visible to a traveller in the Netherlands. On the contrary, there is a respect shown to gentlemen by the Dutch peasantry which could not be surpassed in Sussex or Hampshire, and of which we have much less in Scotland than is common in the south.

The homogeneousness, the nationality of the Hollanders—of which their regard for the Orange family is a symbolic expression—gives a family likeness to all that they do, and all that they are. I have said already that one recognizes Erasmus in Jan Steen. But the same feeling comes over you in various forms in their picture-galleries—in the Boyman Museum at Rotterdam; the Royal Museum at the Hague; the Trippenhuis at Amsterdam. The wonderful industry which finished every red hair in Paul Potter's bull, and made him so *real* that one wonders how a butcher refrains from digging him in the ribs, and why he has not been exhibited in Baker Street—the patient labour which completed the twenty-five figures in Van der Helst's Banquet after the treaty of Munster,—what is that but the same faculty which drained the polders, and covered old sea-beds with rich pasture, and gardens blazing with tulips? The peculiar charm of the great picture-gallery at the Hague is its national character; and one cannot but envy the Dutch for having had such a simultaneous development of their different kinds of genius. The age of Prince Maurice, Olden Barnaveldt, Grotius, was also the age of Rembrandt and Van der Helst. The great men were contemporary with the great portrait-painters. Just so again, Van der Velde lived at the same time with Tromp and De Ruyter; and when the Dutch had an admiral capable of taking a British ship, they had a painter who could put its likeness on a living and moving sea. Their art is a powerful instrument in keeping their patriotism alive. A man loves the landscape better for having been limned by Wouvermans and Cuyp, and feels that he too could have fought under Tromp, when he sees a likeness to his grandmother in a picture by Gerard Dow. I do not wonder, then, at the intense national feeling of the Dutch; and when I was shown by a

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worthy mechanic in an apron, at the collection of naval models and inventions at the Hague, the stern of the *Royal Charles*, captured in the Medway in Charles the Second's reign, I did not grudge it to the good souls. They have fought with us, and they have fought against us; and with us or against us, they have always fought well. Now-a-days, too, it is our true policy to back up the small Free States,—especially those of Teutonic blood—against the great military despotisms of the Continent; and there is no more reason why Britons and Dutchmen should be sore about their past battles, than why a middle-aged man should be sore about his battles at school. The fellow who tapped your claret in the pugilist's sense in your boyhood, is generally extra welcome to do so, in the true vinous signification of the phrase, in after life.

But, indeed, it is not difficult to be friends with the Dutchmen; for in the first place there is a natural affinity between us and them in type and habits. Looking round the *table-d'hôte*, you fix on a solid, dome-headed, blue-eyed, clean-shaven old gentleman, silently consuming his dinner, and you set him down for a respectable London solicitor, who has come to the Hague for a holiday; he turns out to be a Netherlander, who never was in England in his life. The meals themselves come more natural to you than in France. There is no *déjeûner* in the morning, with its cutlets, or *rognons*, potatoes, and *vin ordinaire*—or cider, if you be in Normandy. Everybody takes tea for breakfast, and breakfasts separately. Your little teapot is placed before you, with your quantum of tea in a small case; once, mine came in what looked like an ink-bottle, —an incident which had a fine significance, since I have had many a breakfast out of an ink-bottle before now! If you order nothing special, you take the run of the cheese (reminding one of the Highlands) and of smoked beef in slices as thin as shavings. But by all means, try the national luxury, a fresh herring. The love of the herring is a worship in Holland—partly, I do believe, because the herring-fishery is historic. When the first batch of the new season arrives, men hurry away with them to the capital. A prize of so many hundred guilders (guilder or florin = 1*s.* 8*d.*) rewards the earliest comer. The first dish is carried to the queen; and they sell at a fancy price apiece.

Haring in 's land,
Zicken aan kand.

"When the herring comes in the country, all maladies are past," says the proverb. The "fresh herring" is not cooked—only cured by the seamen in the boats; so that it cuts like raw flesh, but is cool, pungent, and pleasant, with its little garnish of parsley. The smoked herring is called *bukkam*. For breakfast, with, say an omelette, you will pay a guilder; for your bed, a guilder; for dinner, with half a bottle of excellent *vin ordinaire*, two guilders and twenty-five cents, that is, three-and-ninepence. The veal is particularly good, and you get a dozen or more dishes, the last generally a fowl with salad, and a decent dessert. Wine is as dear as at home; nor, indeed, is anything cheap except tobacco. A penny Dutch cigar is as

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respectable as our threepenny ones. They are inveterate smokers in all ranks. The pipe has long been one of the marks of a pastor, or dominie, as they call their clergymen; and I once, in a country village, found the parson hearing his youngsters the catechism, with a cigar in his mouth. These little freedoms of the Dutch clergy, and the much less rigid observance of Sunday in their country, are curious and piquant in Scottish eyes. But there is a freedom in higher matters, of which Scotland has no example. The Arminianism, which, as opposed to the dominant Calvinism, convulsed Holland in the seventeenth century, has now quietly got the mastery in the national theology; and the new theology, inspired by Germany, is steadily sapping the stout old orthodoxy, for which Presbyterianism ought, according to many people, to have been a safe guarantee.

What I have described as the affinity in type and habits between us and the Dutch, is especially shown in their domesticities. They are great people for blood and kindred, and family gatherings; and from all I could hear, their domestic life is pure and respectable. The elopement of a Dutch married lady with a dragoon would shock the country very much like a breach made in the dykes. After twelve and a half years of matrimony a married pair holds its "copper wedding," when a family gathering and a distribution of copper ornaments takes place; at the twenty-fifth anniversary the "silver wedding," with the presents of silver, follows; and when the fiftieth year is attained, a similar ceremony, with gold for its symbols, marks the event. There is, indeed, an antique quaintness in some of the Dutch customs of social life, which is irresistibly comic. When a Dutch dame lies in, for instance, the happy event is not made known to the world in the meagre fashion of our—"Mrs. Tomkins of a son." On the contrary, you read in the *Haarlem Courant* (a paper which has lasted since 1650), that the Vrow So-and-so has been "very prosperously delivered"—"*zeer voorspoedig bevallen*"—of a son, or daughter, as the case may be. Sometimes it is added, "of a very well shapen"—son or daughter! So, too, in the case of death. You meet a functionary in the street in knee-breeches, cocked hat, long piece of crape behind, all black and funereal. That is the *bidder*, who takes the news of a death to every house in the street, and every acquaintance of the defunct. When a person of condition dies there will be four or five *bidders* making the round, and accompanied by an official in an extraordinary black hat, a preternatural wideawake, and a long black gown. He is the *huilebalk*, or *howler*, and while the *bidders* are communicating the mournful news at the door, it is his business to stand a little way off and shed tears, which are charged for in the undertaker's bill. I am sorry to add that the *huilebalk* is becoming obsolete, and his employment falling into disuse. But all these traits of the old Dutch simplicity are somewhat connected with the natural kindliness of the people. I found Dutchmen of all conditions ready to give information and be civil. A fair proportion of them know, and some of them speak, English; but with French you are perfectly comfortable; and the scholars will talk Latin into the

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bargain, if you like. At the Hague, wishing to identify the place of interment of Spinoza, I applied myself to the celebrated chief of the archives, M. Backhuysen van den Brink,* and nothing could be more courteous than his reception. Afterwards I had occasion to consult some books at the Royal Library, and again I found civility and attention, this time at the hands of a gentleman whose ancestry was Scotch. The Royal Library was formerly a house of the English embassy, and contains 150,000 volumes—being richest in the national history. Buckle read here, during his residence at the Hague, when he was studying Dutch; and after spending eight or nine hours over his books, would refresh himself in the evening—with chess.

There are two things which the tourist at the Hague should do after visiting the regular lions, and expending a little money at the beautiful bazaar. He should go out to the wood to hear the military band play on the Wednesday evenings; there being a charm beyond even the admirable music, in forming one of many thousand listening in perfect silence to it amidst the leaves. And he should drive over (though the advice is scarcely necessary) to the watering-place of Schevening, which he will reach through a long alley of trees. There, let him sit down by the beach in front of the hotel (drinking anything but *Bass*, for which he will be charged a guilder the bottle), and contemplate in silence the sea of Van der Velde. I drove out here one evening with a young Belgian gentleman, and was amused by the *naïveté* of the waiter, who was ignorant of my companion's nationality. I had asked the waiter if he was *Hollandais?* "*Malheureusement, monsieur, je suis Belge!*" was the reply. "You see," said my companion, after the man left, "that Belgium is an over-peopled country, and it is hard for them all to find employment."

Half an hour's railway travel brought me one evening from the Hague to Leyden, where I planted myself for some days at the *Lion d'Or*, in the *Breed-straat*. My heart warmed to the old university town, where successive generations of Scotsmen were educated from the sixteenth century onwards; where Henry Fielding studied at twenty years of age, after leaving Eton; from whence Goldsmith (who proceeded to it from Edinburgh) set out with his flute; the town which holds the bones of Joseph Scaliger, and once held the printing-press of the Elzevirs; Leyden, the *Lugdunum Batavorum* of the Romans—the Batavian Athens of the Dutch poets—one of the brightest stars, for three centuries, of the literary constellation of the north. The university of Leyden owed its existence to the city's heroism.

It was founded in 1575 to commemorate the noble defence against the Spaniards during the previous year; and a long list of celebrated

* See the Preface of Mr. Motley (whose admirable Dutch History is already naturalized in the Netherlands) for his obligations to this eminent scholar. Spinoza lies buried—though without a monument—in the Church on the Spuy. The house in which he died has, by a happy fatality, become an orphanage for orphans of the Jewish race.

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scholars has illustrated its name. Joseph Scaliger, Grævius, Perizonius, Burman, Hemsterhuys, Valckenaer,—these are only some of the men mixed up with the literary history of Leyden. The ponderous folios of the two Thesauruses of Grævius saw the light there, as well as the dainty Elzevirs, the ancestors of Didot's *éditions de luxe.* There, was published, by Burman, the last edition of my countryman, George Buchanan, on which occasion Burman made some slighting reflections on Scottish scholarship, for which he was chastised by the patriotic Ruddiman. Leyden, in fact, has always had a cosmopolitan character as a place of study. Thanks to the civility of the authorities, I made a cursory inspection of the *Album* of the University. Poles, Danes, Germans, Hungarians, were sprinkled through the volumes; and so many Scotsmen, that I counted between the years 1727 and 1737 no less than *seven* Campbells and *ten* Gordons. But one entry of world-wide interest I must put with more formality. Under the year 1728 appears this name—HENRICUS FIELDING, ANGLUS, ANN. 20. STUD. LIT. We all knew, before, that Fielding had studied at Leyden, after leaving Eton. But it is interesting to learn that he studied literature, and not law only, and it helps to explain his superior attainments. He was living at the "Hotel of Antwerp," where the liquor was probably good, and which he evidently preferred to lodgings. Oliver Goldsmith's name does not appear in the Album at all. The English church where our British countrymen worshipped, and in which the remains of many of them lie, is now a ruin. Nor is Leyden the resort of foreign students, as it once was. But there are six hundred of the youth of Holland always in its lists, and its dignity has still been sustained in our own days by professors like Peerlkamp and Cobet. The venerable Peerlkamp, whose *Horace* founded a new era in Horatian criticism, now lives in retirement at Hilversum. But Cobet, at present Rector Magnificus of the University, is in the prime of life. Our Scottish Grecian, Mr. William Veitch,—*Scotorum longe doctissimus*—had charged me not to pass through Leyden without paying my respects to Professor Cobet; and I had no reason to repent following his advice. The talk of the professor, who, like most Dutch scholars, understands English but prefers speaking French, and who will talk Latin or Italian if a visitor likes them better, was full of spirit and vigour. He expressed unbounded admiration for Bentley and Porson, and great respect for Dawes, and seemed most familiar, among our living modern scholars, with the names of Christopher Wordsworth, Conington, and Badham. He does not like the collegiate system of university life, but prefers giving students the freedom common to those of Scotland and the Continent.

According to this system, the Leyden students live in lodgings scattered over the streets of their ancient, quiet, picturesque, and under-peopled town. A strange flavour of the mediæval world is given to the shops, by the *cubicula locanda*, which announces that their inmates have students' lodgings to let. To one of these comes the young Dutchman of seventeen or eighteen—a blond Frisian—tall and slim, obstinate somewhat, and

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self-opinionated, as "a free Frisian" may be excused for being; or, a gay Brabanter, social and vivacious—the French Dutchman; or, the shrewd, sturdy, kindly Hollander of North or South Holland. He takes a couple of chambers at the top of a rather steep staircase, and furnishes his sitting-room not without taste and elegance. He usually has a piano there; a shelf of books, among which one is glad to recognize a Shakspeare; and some good engravings,—generally of scenes from Netherlands' history. In the morning, he attends classes at the university,—a venerable edifice of pale red, with a row of five arched and five square windows on its chief portion, which is shaped like a tower. The university stands on a canal bordered by trees, right opposite the house once occupied by the Elzevirs, and has a charming botanic garden at the back. A room full of portraits of the old professors, among which one soon distinguishes the hoary beard of Scaliger, gives to the building a pleasant human and genial antiquity, —in harmony with which is the employment of the Latin language for all the teaching of literature and law. Here, the student attends in different class-rooms, presenting nothing but very plain interior arrangements, the *lectiones* of his various professors. He dines in a mess of his own, with other selected comrades, or perhaps at the students' club, the "Minerva," about four o'clock, and devotes the evening to country rambles, to study, or to one of the two favourite *cafés* in the *Breed-straat*.

It was vacation-time when I was in Leyden; but a happy accident gave me the acquaintance of a knot of Dutch gentlemen, who had finished their studies for the learned professions, and were winding-up their university life. With a hospitality which I shall never forget, they received me into the bosom of their set; made me an honorary member of their mess; and, during a jolly week of lovely summer weather, laid open to me the pleasantest recesses of Leyden student life. It was a revival of the old days when Maxwells, and M'Dowalls, and Gordons met, at many a festive compotation amidst the same scenes, the descendants of the *Batavi*, and cheered with song and laughter the last hours of the quietly-dying Rhine. In the forenoons we visited St. Peter's Church, which holds the monuments of Scaliger* and of Boerhave; or strolled round the promenade—cool with wood and water—which encircles the town like a rural nymph's zone; or inspected the noble museums, rich with the spoil of the ancient life of the Indies—the ancient worlds of Etruria, Greece, and Egypt, and the curious civilization of Japan. Weeks of study might be bestowed on any of these collections; and that of Japan is so uniquely endowed that the Leyden authorities *dare not* show it the other day to the Japanese ambassadors. It contains many objects—quietly brought away—the exportation of which is forbidden by the Japanese Government. At four o'clock the most comfortable-looking of Dutchwomen (a comely race

* It was removed there, on the church (a Walloon one) where he was buried falling into decay. His bones actually lie in an almost unapproachable situation, surrounded by the lowest female population of the town.

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on the whole, and commendably given to well-plaited caps, and stockings of a piquant whiteness) had our dinner ready in the cool ground-floor room in a retired street. The veal of Holland was washed down by the beer of Bavaria, and its melons were moistened gratefully with the white wine of the Rhine, and the red wine of Burgundy,—the last the favourite tipple of Erasmus. Some old impressions of mine regarding the probable liquors of Dutch students were disturbed—nay, exploded—by this week at Leyden. I had expected to find their national "Hollands" occupying a similar position to our Scottish whisky. I thought that it would have played a part in the Dutch civilization, like that great gulf-stream of toddy which flows through my native land—softening our natural severity, tempering our old fanaticism, and modifying our rugged climate. But no class above the lowest drinks Hollands in Holland; and what seems stranger, even their pleasant Curaçoa—with us a refreshment rather distinguished than otherwise—ranks among them as a peasant's drink. Dinner over, we drove out to the country, to enjoy the coolness of the evening air—sometimes seaward, till the long range of the dunes came in view—the barrier of the coast—and we saw a string of distant wild ducks, like a kite's tail, in the air; sometimes to the villages through which Oliver Goldsmith trudged with his flute—villages surrounded by orchards and gardens, and where the presence of a foreigner brought peasants in wooden shoes, and women with foreheads ornamented with metallic plates, to the doors. On other occasions, we visited the environs of the Hague. But perhaps the pleasantest fun of all was to embark from a tavern garden on some canal, and take a quiet row past the country houses and windmills. Returning from such a trip during the stillness of sunset, we would call on one of the party for the national air—the "Netherlands Blood"—all hats going off while the performance lasted. And this would be followed by one of the old student-songs of the country—running in the following fashion :—

Io vivat! Io vivat!
Nostrorum sanitas!
Dum nihil est in poculo,
Tum repleatur denuo!
Io vivat! etc.

Nos jungit amicitia,
Et vinum præbet gaudia!
Io vivat! etc.

There was, of course, much interchange of international good feeling on these occasions, and no little curious speechifying in a somewhat piebald diction. May I hope that there lingers at Leyden some remembrance of a comfortably-built *Scotus*, who, at the second *cognac-grogue*, addressed the company, in the Latin language, on the propriety of a league between the Teutonic nations, for general purposes of politics and conviviality?

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The Story of the Mhow Court-Martial.

The passionate interpellations of Mr. William Coningham, and the more moderate and practical statements of Mr. Dudley Fortescue, towards the end of last session, respecting certain facts arising out of a court-martial held at Mhow, in Central India, in the spring of 1862, upon Captain Smales, the late Paymaster of the 6th Inniskilling Dragoons, have familiarized the public with the name of that now notorious tribunal, without either acquainting them with the nature of the case submitted to it, or of the evidence by which it was induced to arrive at a verdict entirely approved of by his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in India, severely criticized by H.R.H. the Commander-in-Chief at home, and since condemned as illegal and quashed by the advice of the law officers of the Crown.

Were it not that a second court-martial, directed to inquire into a deplorable incident which is alleged to have resulted from certain proceedings connected with the trial of Captain Smales, is shortly about to assemble, it would be scarcely worth while to attempt to disentangle the strange skein of conflicting evidence recorded in the Parliamentary Blue Book containing the proceedings of the court-martial which cashiered Captain Smales. But, in order to understand the case which is now about to be inquired into, it is absolutely necessary to understand the merits of the case which was inquired into and adjudicated upon at Mhow in 1862; and I believe I shall be discharging a useful public duty if I endeavour to draw up a more complete and intelligible narrative of that complicated and painful affair than can be collected from the proceedings of the court as published by order of the House of Commons.

On the 25th of April, 1861, about 9.30 A.M., Lieutenant-Colonel T. R. Crawley, an officer who had recently exchanged from the 15th Hussars into the 6th Dragoons, arrived at Ahmednugger, in the Deccan, where his new regiment then lay. Colonel Crawley had had a hot and fatiguing night journey from Poona, and was, as was natural, ready for his breakfast, which he directed his servant to order from the regimental mess. But when the food was prepared, a momentary difficulty arose. The colonel had no travelling canteen, and the quarters at which he had alighted were unprovided with plate and crockery. His servant, however, soon borrowed the necessary articles from the house of a married officer who lived hard by, and by 11 A.M., exactly an hour and a half after he had driven into the cantonment, the hungry and tired traveller and his party sat down to as comfortable a meal as men could desire. But the new commanding officer of the 6th Dragoons was not satisfied.

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He considered that a vexatious delay had occurred in providing him with refreshment, and moodily decided in his own mind that it must have been intentionally caused by the insubordinate malice of the president of the mess.

This trumpery anecdote, which is extracted from Colonel Crawley's reply to Captain Smales' defence before the court at Mhow, was actually cited by the former as the first of a long series of deliberate insults which the colonel stated himself to have received at the hands of the officers of the 6th Dragoons, to almost all of whom he was an entire stranger when he joined, and who consequently could have had—at that time at least—no conceivable motive for the strange perversity of which they were thus accused by their angry commanding officer. Colonel Crawley adduced no evidence of any kind before the court-martial to prove that any delay in ministering to his appetite on the occasion of his first breakfast at Mhow had really occurred; still less did he attempt to show that he had any reasonable grounds for attributing such delay, if it did occur, to the president of the mess; indeed he deferred telling the story at all to anybody until a year after its alleged occurrence; and when he did tell it, he told it in his reply, when he well knew that the party inculpated by it could not defend himself against the absurd imputation.

On the evening of the day on which this curious misunderstanding took place, a general meeting of the officers of the 6th Dragoons was convened at their new colonel's quarters, when Colonel Crawley, passing over in silence the slight which he supposed himself to have received, shook hands with them all, and explained to them that he meant to be very particular in all matters connected with the duties of the regiment; but that "off parade" it would be his wish to meet them and treat them "as officers and gentlemen."

Not many days elapsed, however, before Colonel Crawley discovered, by his own account, that the very great majority of his new comrades were neither officers nor gentlemen; and that in exchanging from the 15th Hussars into the 6th Dragoons he had fallen into a hornets', or, rather, into a drones', nest. With the *morale* of the non-commissioned officers and men of the Inniskillings he admitted that he had no fault to find; they were generally on good terms with each other, their conduct was excellent, and a very small amount of crime was recorded against them; they were well set up, too, and admirable on foot-parade; but as to the riding of the regiment, its internal economy, the condition of its horses, and the behaviour and temper of its commissioned officers, Colonel Crawley protested to the court at Mhow that "it was quite another story."

The commissioned officers of the 6th Dragoons Colonel Crawley represented as having been long "in a state of chronic insubordination;" he could find amongst them no single gentleman of standing position and education with whom he could take counsel in the overwhelming difficulties which soon beset him; the regimental adjutant was disgracefully

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incompetent, and an organized system of resistance to authority was in existence, which "almost terrified" the late colonel of the 15th Hussars.

This fearful state of things Colonel Crawley attributed to the weakness and incapacity of his predecessor in command, Colonel Shute, an officer of very high character, who was subsequently selected by H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge to reorganize the 4th Dragoon Guards, after the Bentinck-Robertson difficulty. Colonel Crawley readily admitted that Colonel Shute's rule over the non-commissioned officers and men of the 6th Dragoons might have been "good and beneficent;" but he did not hesitate to express his conviction that Colonel Shute had been quite unequal to deal with "the turbulent spirits" by whom his regiment was officered, and that he (Col. C.) was the first commanding officer they had met with "who would not submit to their dictation, or bend his neck to their sway."

Colonel Crawley's painful convictions as to the professional shortcomings of his insubordinates were speedily made known to them by numerous General Orders of unusual vigour which he felt it his duty to issue. He informed them that neither the officers nor men of the regiment knew how to ride; that the captains of troops looked much more sharply after their perquisites than after the efficiency of their horses and men;* and he reproached them in language to which they had hitherto been unaccustomed with their slovenly and unsoldierlike ways, and with the parsimony and indifference they displayed in the performance of their various duties.

Demoralized as was the official condition of the Inniskillings when Colonel Crawley assumed the command of that corps, its social state, according to the same authority, was, if possible, worse. Its officers were incessantly engaged in discreditable squabbles with each other; their language was habitually violent and low; and a "moral and social" difficulty, which baffled all Colonel Crawley's calm and judicious efforts at arrangement, soon deprived him of the support of the married members of the mess, and laid the foundation of the ill-feeling between himself and his paymaster, which ended, as will be seen, in the professional ruin of Captain Smales.

The nature of this "moral and social" difficulty has been entirely kept out of sight by the president and members of the court-martial at Mhow. It is, however, absolutely necessary, in order to understand the merits of the story which the Blue Book professes to relate, that it should be distinctly indicated; and I will do no more than indicate it, referring those who may be anxious for further particulars to the Proceedings of the Court of Divorce in May, 1858. When the 6th Dragoons proceeded to India in that year, several changes occurred amongst its officers, and about a year before Colonel Crawley took command of it, a captain and

* The Regimental State of the 6th Dragoons, on the 1st of March, 1861, showed only 13 sick and lame horses out of between 600 and 700.

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his wife exchanged into the regiment from the —— Light Dragoons, and were cordially received into its society. But, shortly afterwards, it came to be known that the lady was a *divorcée*, and that her former marriage had been dissolved, according to Lord Campbell, by whom the operation had been performed, "under circumstances of peculiar profligacy." This painful disclosure created, as may be supposed, considerable scandal amongst the small European society of the station, and all the married officers of the Inniskillings, with the exception of Colonel Crawley, declined to concede any longer to the lady the local rank which she had hitherto enjoyed amongst their wives and daughters as an honest woman.

Colonel Crawley, it would seem, espoused the divorced lady's cause with considerable warmth, urging upon his married officers that they ought to allow "by-gones to be by-gones;" and endeavouring to enforce the liberal doctrine that as long as a male or female Inniskillinger conducted himself or herself with propriety after joining the regiment, no member of the corps was entitled to inquire into any peccadillos of which the party might have been previously guilty elsewhere. He even went so far as to express to his officers his opinion, that if a certain official tin box, containing old regimental papers, which Colonel Crawley, with delicate irony, called "Colonel Shute's legacy," was examined, there were very few of them whose characters would stand the scrutiny. And, finally, Colonel Crawley issued a formal memorandum, in which he peremptorily ordered "that the harmony and good feeling which should always exist between officers of the same corps, should not be jeopardized by any further allusion to this moral and social difficulty by any officer under his command" (p. 53).

The two individuals who seem to have resisted most firmly Colonel Crawley's liberality on the subject of the Seventh Commandment were, as might have been expected, the two senior married officers of his regiment, Surgeon Turnbull and Paymaster Smales. From the date of the memorandum which has just been quoted, all friendly intimacy between these two gentlemen and their commanding officer ceased; constant squabbles between the parties are indicated throughout the evidence recorded in the Blue Book; and very grave complaints against Messrs. Smales and Turnbull, on apparently very trivial grounds, appear to have been forwarded from time to time to the superior authorities with varying results. On one occasion, we read that Mr. Turnbull received a reprimand from Sir William Mansfield, the Commander-in-Chief at Bombay, for "not having compassed the sanitary wants of his corps in harmony with his commanding officer;" on another, that a Court of Inquiry was held, by request of Colonel Crawley, on Paymaster Smales, the proceedings of which are not given; but from Captain Smales' ungratified anxiety that they should be laid before the tribunal by which he was cashiered, it is probable that the result was not entirely advantageous to Colonel Crawley and his friends.

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At last, Captain Smales, tormented beyond endurance by the vigilant persecution of his commanding officer and his commanding officer's party in the regiment—for by that time the Inniskillings were divided into Crawleyites and anti-Crawleyites, the former being led by the married captain, whose case had occasioned the "moral and social" difficulty by which the regiment was agitated—addressed an official letter to his colonel, describing the various annoyances to which he conceived himself to be unjustly exposed, and requesting that the document might be forwarded to the superior authorities for their consideration.

Had the Paymaster of the 6th Dragoons done no more than this, he might possibly not have done himself much harm, although, in the military profession, kicking against the pricks is a very dangerous experiment, under the most favourable circumstances. But he, unfortunately, did do more. The system of persecution, of which he complained, was of the following nature. His daily proceedings were closely scrutinized, and his careless conversation was privily taken down in writing by his colonel's agents in the regiment; and whenever he was caught tripping in the slightest degree, as grave charges were immediately framed against him as if he had been guilty of deliberate and serious infractions of the Articles of War. In order the better to explain the nature of his grievance, Captain Smales had imprudently reminded Colonel Crawley, in his letter, that he, too, was often in the habit of infringing the Articles of War in small matters; that he was often absent from muster-parades, at which he, nevertheless, returned himself as present; that he habitually used towards his subordinates harsh and unusual terms of reproach; and that he had even been so incautious as to intimate to several of his officers, when arranging differences amongst them, his regret that the days were gone by, when such matters were settled "in quite another way," with less trouble to commanding officers, and more trouble to coroners. "Were I to act in such a manner," asked Captain Smales, "what would my position be, looking at your recent and continued proceedings against me?"

Although the paymaster's letter was couched in terms of the most studied respect, there can be no doubt that the tendency of these remarks was insubordinate; and insubordination is a military offence which ought never to be overlooked. But there are such things as extenuating circumstances; and there is an amount of provocation which exceeds the bounds of human patience, and beyond which officers and gentlemen cannot be expected to endure, even though utter ruin should be the certain consequence of resistance or retort. A single hot word, a single menacing gesture towards a superior, even under the most wanton and gross insults, is insubordination, and the Articles of War, rigidly interpreted, punish that crime by professional ruin, and even by death.

And there is no doubt that this rule—as a general rule—is wise and necessary, and that it ought to be carried out as far as it reasonably may; but it is overtaxing human nature to an extravagant degree to attempt to

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carry it out in all cases to the letter. That Captain Smales deserved a reprimand for his insubordinate observations on the looseness and asperity of his colonel's official habits, cannot be denied; it is absurd, however, to suppose that an error, committed under such gross provocation as that which Captain Smales had received from Colonel Crawley and his friends, was appropriately punished by a sentence which must entail upon him social as well as professional ruin.

On the receipt of Captain Smales's letter, Colonel Crawley seems to have been much perplexed. He pondered over it for three weeks, during which interval Lieutenant-Colonel Prior, his second in command, endeavoured unsuccessfully to induce Captain Smales to withdraw his complaints. Colonel Crawley affirms that he never authorized Colonel Prior to act thus; and, if so, it is difficult to account for the improper delay which took place in the transmission of the document. At last, after he had ascertained that Colonel Prior's good offices had failed, Colonel Crawley handed the letter to General Farrell, an old and infirm Indian officer, commanding at Mhow, and by General Farrell it was forwarded to Sir William Mansfield, at Bombay.

Had the customary routine of the service been adhered to on this occasion, a court of inquiry would have been at once appointed to ascertain whether, *primâ facie*, sufficient grounds existed for the paymaster's complaints. If the court of inquiry had decided that such grounds did exist, a court-martial would have been ordered on Colonel Crawley, and Captain Smales would have been called upon to prove the charges which his letter implied. If, on the contrary, the court of inquiry had decided against Captain Smales, that officer would himself have been liable to be brought to trial for having frivolously, vexatiously, or falsely accused his commanding officer. It was of vital importance to Captain Smales that the court of inquiry, usual in such cases, should sit, in order that he might lay his grievances before that tribunal, and adduce whatever evidence he could command to support them.

For reasons which have not yet been made public, Sir William Mansfield thought fit to pass by Captain Smales' complaints, without, as far as I can discover, hearing any explanation save that privately supplied to him by Colonel Crawley; and, without appointing any court of inquiry, he ordered that Captain Smales should himself be tried by a court-martial on three charges, which imputed to him insubordination in having made certain false and malicious accusations against his commanding officer; and at this court-martial Sir William ordered that Colonel Crawley should prosecute. By such an unexpected arrangement, Captain Smales was obviously placed at a very great disadvantage. He was deprived of the power of stating and proving his grievances against Colonel Crawley, whilst, on the other hand, Colonel Crawley, though prosecutor, was in a position to offer himself as a witness, and to state on oath to the court his own version of what had occurred between himself and his paymaster.

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That Captain Smales' letter was insubordinate there could be no doubt, and had he been tried on that single charge, he must necessarily have been convicted. But he was not tried on that charge for an obvious reason. A statement may be insubordinate, yet perfectly true. But a colonel of a regiment could hardly hope to retain his position and influence, if he brought one of his officers to trial for having made imputations against himself, of which he tacitly admitted the truth. Captain Smales was therefore tried for insubordination in having made certain false and malicious statements. The only real issue into which the court had to inquire was a very narrow one. It resolved itself simply into whether, on two specified occasions—the 1st of May, 1861, and the 1st of January, 1862—Colonel Crawley had or had not been present at the muster-parades of his regiment. That the other charges against Captain Smales were utterly frivolous and vexatious a very few words will show. Reference to the evidence given by Colonel Crawley's own witnesses as to his remarks on the subject of duelling, proves that they were such as, without any evil intent, might have been fairly understood as Captain Smales and his witnesses swore that they had understood them. That Colonel Crawley did not seriously intend to suggest to his officers a revival of the practice of single combat, is more than probable ; but that he spoke loosely and incautiously on the subject, especially when addressing a number of excited young men, whom he himself has described as "turbulent spirits," is perfectly clear from his own admissions before the court.* With respect to his habitual use of harsh and unusual terms of reproach towards those over whom he was placed in command, I need offer no conclusions of my own. The Mhow Court-martial decided that it was "false and malicious" in Captain Smales to have asserted that Colonel Crawley did so; but it will be seen from the "Remarks" of Sir Hugh Rose, that even the Commander-in-Chief in India declined to ratify their verdict on that point; and when the evidence was submitted to the Commander-in-Chief at home, his Royal Highness at once recorded his dissent from the finding of the court-martial, commented with severity on the unmeasured language which Colonel Crawley had been proved to have used towards his officers, and expressed "his hope that, in future, Colonel Crawley would be able to carry on discipline without outraging the feelings of the gentlemen under his command."

But seven witnesses were called by Colonel Crawley to prove his presence on parade. The highest in rank of these was the captain whose wife

* I remarked that when I first entered the service, quarrels were settled in a very different way than by appealing to the commanding officer. I informed the disputants that in those days officers settled matters between themselves when they quarrelled. I said I was almost tempted to wish that those days were still in existence. . . . . Such was the substance of my remarks to my officers. I have no recollection of having made use of the word duelling, though doubtless my remarks pointed that way.—*Colonel Crawley's Evidence, pp.* 7-8.

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had occasioned the "social and moral difficulty" which has been already described; the next was a lieutenant, who had been promoted from the ranks of the 11th Hussars, and had, under Colonel Crawley's predecessor, been an unsuccessful candidate for the adjutancy and the quartermastership of the regiment. The third was a veterinary surgeon in the Indian service, temporarily attached to the Inniskillings, who, by Colonel Crawley's own showing, had been engaged in several squabbles with its officers; the fourth was a lieutenant named Bennett, to whose evidence reference will presently be made. Then came two sergeants, men of doubtful character, as the regimental records will show, and a private dragoon. Colonel Crawley assured the court that, had he thought fit, he could have produced sixty or seventy other witnesses to establish his case; and, considering the antecedents of those whom he did produce, it does seem extraordinary that he did not make a larger or better selection. His witnesses, however, such as they were, pulled well together, and swore stoutly that, on the occasions in question, they had seen their colonel on parade.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that the weight of evidence, both as to character and numbers, was enormously on the side of the defendant. The major of the 6th Dragoons, two of its captains, its adjutant, its riding-master, two of its lieutenants, its regimental sergeant-major, four of its sergeant-majors, and its paymaster-sergeant, all swore positively that, being themselves present, they had not seen Colonel Crawley at the muster-parades of May, 1861, and January, 1862. As a general rule, the positive evidence of a witness who has seen a circumstance occur ought to outweigh the negative evidence of many witnesses who, having themselves been present at the time, can only swear that they did not see it happen; but such a rule cannot be held to apply to the presence of a commanding officer on parade, who must necessarily occupy such an important and prominent position in the mind of every actor present, as to render negative evidence in such a case as convincing as positive evidence. Moreover, Colonel Crawley swore that at the muster-parade of the 1st of May, 1861, he had spoken to the mustering officer, who had asked his permission, as commanding officer, to commence the muster; whilst the mustering officer swore, not only that he had not seen Colonel Crawley till the muster was concluded, but that he had obtained leave to begin, and had reported the conclusion of the muster to the senior captain of the regiment, who had commanded on the occasion. And the senior captain of the regiment corroborated on oath the mustering officer's evidence on all points.

The two witnesses whose evidence was most damaging to Colonel Crawley were the regimental sergeant-major, Lilley, and the adjutant, Fitzsimon. Military men will readily understand that to suppose that the commanding officer of a regiment could be present on two occasions at muster parade without the cognizance of those functionaries, would overtask the credulity of any court-martial—unless very cogent reasons indeed

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could be assigned for their ignorance. Colonel Crawley appears to have felt this, and to have resorted to extreme measures in order to neutralize their evidence. The adjutant's claims to credibility he disposed of by asserting, in his reply, that that officer "was known to be so blind as to be unable to ascertain the identity of any individual at a distance of five yards." The evidence of the regimental sergeant-major he set aside by a still stronger course of procedure. Whilst the court-martial was sitting, but before Lilley had been examined, Colonel Crawley suddenly placed him and two other sergeant-majors of the regiment, who had been subpœnaed as witnesses for the defence, in close arrest, declaring that he had evidence to prove that they were engaged in a conspiracy against him. And when they subsequently deposed before the court to their colonel's absence from the parades of May, 1861, and January, 1862, Colonel Crawley merely replied that "they had been guilty of conspiracy against him," and were therefore unworthy to be believed on their oaths.

The president and members of the court-martial seem to have seen no objection to the unusual manner in which Colonel Crawley conducted his case, and after having heard the prisoner's defence, they at once found him guilty on all three charges, and sentenced him to be cashiered.

To impute to officers and gentlemen such as those who constituted the court-martial at Mhow, deliberate partiality and injustice, is a serious step, not to be lightly adventured upon. I will therefore content myself with recapitulating a very few of the grounds upon which it appears to me that such charges might reasonably be advanced against Colonel Payn and his colleagues, unless good reasons, which I have yet to hear, can be assigned in explanation of their conduct. And having done this, I will leave my readers to convict or absolve them according to the usually received rules of right and wrong.

1. It is to be gathered from the Mhow Blue Book, that every impediment which the power of the commanding officer of the 6th Dragoons could throw in the way of the prisoner in preparing his defence was opposed to him—that not only were his most important witnesses coerced and imprisoned on unfounded charges, but that orders were actually issued forbidding the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the regiment from holding intercourse with Captain Smales, thereby preventing the prisoner from communicating freely with the witnesses by whom alone his innocence could be established. And it further appears that when he appealed to the court to protect his witnesses and himself the court coldly declined to interfere.

2. When Lieutenant Bennett, a witness for the prosecution, was sworn, he deposed positively to the prosecutor's presence at the muster-parade of the 1st May, 1862. He stated that on that occasion Colonel Crawley had spoken to him, and circumstantially described the nature of the remark which he had made, the calling of the roll, and the parading of the officers' chargers. Lieutenant Bennett's evidence, if true, was conclusive. The court-martial, if they believed it, had no choice but to convict the

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prisoner as a malicious liar. But as soon as Bennett withdrew, written documents signed by that witness himself were referred to, which proved that at the very time at which he had represented himself as present at the muster-parade, chatting with his colonel about the length of the hair on the horses' legs, he had been engaged several miles away on a duty which rendered his alleged presence at the muster-parade impossible. Lieutenant Bennett, on being confronted with his own handwriting, was obliged to confess that the evidence which he had given was false; and to explain that he must have mistaken a watering-parade held on the 30th of April, at which no roll was called, no officers' chargers paraded, and at which Colonel Crawley did not claim to have been present, for the muster-parade of the 1st of May. He begged to be allowed to withdraw the whole of the evidence which he had given—and did so.

In acting thus, it is clear that Lieutenant Bennett was guilty either of wilful perjury or of perjury through carelessness. In either case, his conduct was equally damaging to the prisoner; in either case it called for the serious censure of the court. The Mhow Court-martial, however, passed no censure of any kind upon him, and eventually dismissed him with the comforting assurance that they were satisfied that he had merely committed the venial error of mistaking a watering-parade in April for a muster-parade in May. More than this. When Captain Smales, in his defence, took that strong and serious view of Colonel Crawley's extraordinary proceedings, and of Lieutenant Bennett's wilful or careless perjury, which a prisoner struggling for his private character and his future professional position was unquestionably entitled to take, the court actually thought it just and decent to reprimand him in the following terms:—

"We cannot receive your address without expressing our opinion that you have indulged in the most unwarrantable and offensive recriminations on the prosecutor, and the most unjustifiable reflections on a number of the prosecutor's witnesses; and we would remark more especially on your impeachment of the truthfulness and honour of Lieutenant Bennett, whose explanation has been already pronounced, and is still considered by the court as perfectly satisfactory."*

The protection thus extended by the members of the Mhow Court-martial to Colonel Crawley and his witnesses is rendered all the more remarkable by the fact that they declined to extend any sort of protection at all to the numerous witnesses who came forward, in spite of the cruel

* The court-martial even went so far as to pass a special censure upon the captain of the troop to which Lieutenant Bennett belonged, for "not having made his subaltern aware that he had been on a committee at the time he supposed himself to have been on the muster-parade, of which fact he was fully cognizant, previous to Lieutenant Bennett's appearance in court"—although his captain had stated on oath that he himself had not been aware of the fact at the time that Lieutenant Bennett had spoken to him on the subject, and there was no evidence to the contrary before the court.—(pp. 46-7.)

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obstacles thrown in their way by the prosecutor, to establish the defence. Colonel Crawley was permitted by the court to impute wilful perjury to almost all of them; to sneer at "the stolid ignorance" of one officer, and to denounce the "vile motives" of others; and thus to apostrophize in his reply the gentleman who then was, and who still is, the major of the Inniskilling Dragoons:—

"I have proved from your own lips that you never forgive; that you are of a sordid and malignant disposition; that you are insubordinate, insolent, and defiant to those placed in authority over you; that you are tyrannical and abusive to those under you; that you are arrogant and intolerant amongst your associates," &c. &c.—(p. 165).

3. The crime which Colonel Crawley declared himself determined to substantiate at some future time against Sergeant-major Lilley and his two comrades, and of which he succeeded in persuading the court-martial to consider them guilty by anticipation, being based on the fact that they had read a portion of the proceedings of the court after the president had forbidden their publication, the prisoner asked one of Colonel Crawley's witnesses, in cross-examination, whether the prosecutor also had not read to his own witnesses the proceedings of the court, after their publication had been forbidden by Lieutenant-colonel Payn.

The court immediately interposed, and ruled that the question was an improper one, and must be withdrawn. But when the prosecutor subsequently put a question of precisely the same nature to Lilley and Wakefield, two of the prisoner's witnesses, the court raised no objection whatever, and the question was answered.

The sensation which this exorbitant display of partiality occasioned—even at Mhow—seems to have brought the members of the court-martial for a moment to their senses; for the Blue Book tells us that they ordered the prosecutor's witness to be recalled, and directed him to answer, on the 9th of May, the very question which, on the 3rd of May, they had decided to be an improper question. And the reply which it received at once betrayed the reason why the prosecutor's friends in the court had objected to it in the first instance. It turned out that Colonel Crawley had himself been guilty of the very crime—if crime it was—for which he was so cruelly persecuting the prisoner's witnesses; and that he had actually read to his own witnesses in private the very proceedings of which the president of the court had forbidden the publication.—(pp. 83, 84.)

4. When Lilley and his comrades were brought up in arrest to give their evidence, it became all-important to the prisoner to prove to the members of the court that they were—what everybody who knew them, knew them to be—honest men and good soldiers—worthy of all belief; although undergoing persecution and imprisonment at the hands of their commanding officer for ends of his own. Captain Smales, therefore, asked them whether they were under arrest, and if so, with what crime they were charged. The court again came to the rescue of Colonel Crawley, and decided that this most proper and pertinent question could not be

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put; and thus enabled the prosecutor to discredit and set aside the important evidence of these three men. Had they been allowed to reply, "We are indeed under close and cruel arrest, but we have never been charged with any crime," it is but reasonable to suppose that the verdict of the court would have been different from what it was.

The finding of the court-martial on Captain Smales was duly forwarded to the Commander-in-Chief in India, who at once confirmed its sentence. His Excellency made no comment upon the partial and illegal manner in which the trial had been conducted from first to last, on the pressure which had been put on the prisoner's witnesses, on their long and cruel imprisonment, or on the vindictive and defamatory language in which the prosecutor had been permitted to indulge towards every officer whose evidence had been unfavourable to him. None of these points, in Sir Hugh Rose's opinion, called for his displeasure, or even his notice. With the verdict, and with the extraordinary manner in which it had been obtained, he appeared entirely satisfied.

But towards the officers and gentlemen who had presumed to give what Sir Hugh Rose considered "insubordinate" evidence against their commanding officer, his Excellency bore himself in a very different spirit. He commenced a formal memorandum, which he promulgated, on the subject of the Mhow Court-martial, with the observation that "its proceedings furnished proof that both before and after Colonel Crawley's arrival there was discord between the officers of the regiment, neglect on the part of many of them, the two seniors included, of the simplest and most essential cavalry duties; impatience of reproof, however merited, unaccompanied by amendment; insubordination, which, under the influence of a baneful example, extended itself to some of the non-commissioned officers, and a caballing of one and the other against the head of the regiment."

Grave charges these, if supported by proof—weak and rash words when shown, as they presently were, to be entirely undeserved by those to whom they had been so inconsiderately applied. Had Sir Hugh Rose, in thus collectively condemning the former commanding officer of the 6th Dragoons, the system which he had established, and the officers whom he had trained, confined himself to disparaging generalities, the objects of his censure must perforce have borne the chastisement in silence. But, unluckily for Sir Hugh, he could not resist the temptation of condescending into particulars, and in a terribly prolix string of "Remarks," extending to no less than forty paragraphs, his Excellency showered broadcast over Colonel Shute, and over every witness who had not "supported" Colonel Crawley at the late trial, the incoherent vials of his wrath. And, in doing this, he unwittingly fell into a trap which had been ingeniously prepared for him by Colonel Crawley, in which that gentleman had already caught Lieutenant-Colonel Payn and the other members of the Mhow Court-martial.

In his reply to the prisoner's defence, Colonel Crawley had taken the

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improper liberty of introducing a large amount of entirely fresh matter of the most damaging kind, no portion of which had been proved in evidence before the court. The members of the court either did not remark this, or were unconscious of the illegality of permitting a prosecutor and witness to make two statements to them—one on oath, the other not on oath.* They therefore allowed him to argue as freely and positively on this new matter as if it had been substantiated by the evidence which he himself and his other witnesses had given on oath. He raked together all the stale regimental squabbles which the old papers in "Colonel Shute's legacy" could suggest to him, and commented upon them as if they had been matters of recent and everyday occurrence in the regiment under his command; he described his adjutant as disqualified from giving credible evidence by reason of his notorious blindness; and his other officers, "with a few brilliant exceptions," as a gang of insubordinate conspirators, unworthy to be believed on their oaths; and the court actually listened to him in approving silence, and, to judge from their verdict, paid serious attention to his unsupported rodomontades. And Sir Hugh Rose, in subsequently framing his "Remarks," acted with even greater carelessness and credulity, for he not only assumed that everything which had been stated by Colonel Crawley in his reply had been proved by evidence taken on the trial, but he even commented with signal severity upon many points to which neither Colonel Crawley nor any of his witnesses had ventured publicly to allude, and with which his Excellency must have consequently been made acquainted by information privately imparted to him since the trial. It is true that these imputations were altogether irrelevant to the issue which had been tried; but they were made by the Commander-in-Chief in India the grounds of public and severe censure upon individuals who had been afforded no opportunity of explanation or defence, and if they are false, neither the anonymous informant who communicated them to the Commander-in-Chief, nor that high official who inconsiderately endorsed and acted upon them, ought to escape the censure of the authorities at home. And if it should turn out on further inquiry that the confirming officer and the prosecutor were in collusion with each other, and that Sir Hugh Rose permitted Colonel Crawley to strengthen his case against Captain Smales by *ex-parte* statements privily made to his Excellency, to the prejudice of the prisoner and his witnesses, it would be difficult to select words sufficiently energetic and incisive to stigmatize as it would deserve such a perversion of justice and such a prostitution of power. Sir Hugh Rose dealt out in his "Remarks" grave official damnation on officers and gentlemen who at the time held, and who still hold, her Majesty's commission, solely in consequence of the vague and spiteful gossip with which Colonel Crawley

* And where a party fills the double character of witness and prosecutor, and conducts the prosecution in person, there is the high authority of Lord Chief Justice Campbell for the proposition that he cannot make two statements to the court—one on oath, and the other not on oath.—*Law Times, May* 11, 1850.

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had thought it effective to season his reply; he endorsed Colonel Crawley's unsupported assertions that at the time the 6th Dragoons passed into that officer's hands from those of Colonel Shute, that distinguished regiment was little better than a slovenly band of insubordinate *fainéants;* forgetting altogether that but a few months before its command devolved upon Colonel Crawley, both he himself and Sir William Mansfield had inspected the regiment on three several occasions, and had on each recorded their high sense of its discipline and efficiency. On one of these occasions Sir Hugh had complimented Colonel Shute "on the military spirit which he had infused into his officers, and on the pride which they evidently took in their fine regiment." On another, his Excellency had dwelt especially "on the admirable condition of the horses of the 6th Dragoons," which, he logically argued, "proved that the greatest care must have been paid on that essential point by both officers and men." Nay, at the very moment when the Commander-in-Chief in India, for the better support of Colonel Crawley, was sententiously informing the officers of the 6th Dragoons that "care of their horses was the first duty of cavalry," and was publicly reprimanding them for their negligence and indifference in that respect, a report was lying on his Excellency's table—its ink scarcely dry—from Colonel Apperley, an officer selected by the Government to examine into the stable economy of the British cavalry in India; and in that report, which is dated May 1, 1862, the matchless condition and soundness of the horses of the 6th Dragoons, and the general efficiency of the corps, are held up by Colonel Apperley as an example to the rest of the army.

It is painful to have to deal thus with an officer of Sir Hugh Rose's proved gallantry and high position; but in pleading the cause of the weak against the strong, there is no reason why any particular forbearance should be exercised towards one, who, to judge from the tone and temper of his "Remarks," is not himself in the habit of using much forbearance towards others. Time and space prevent me from going through his Excellency's voluminous "Remarks" paragraph by paragraph, which I could very easily do, showing from recorded official testimony how careless and unjust they are. One more specimen, however, of Sir Hugh's reckless inconsistency I must give, before I proceed with my story.

Early in 1861, just about the time when Colonel Shute had determined to hand over his insubordinate and slovenly corps to the regenerating hands of Colonel Crawley, he received several official communications from the Military Secretary of the Commander-in-Chief in India. From the spirit of Sir Hugh Rose's "Remarks," it will be anticipated that these communications must have partaken of the nature of reproofs, on account of the unsuccessful and unsatisfactory manner in which the commanding officer of the 6th Dragoons had discharged the duties which he was about to relinquish. Not so. They were of the most agreeable and flattering nature that could be addressed to a cavalry officer of Colonel Shute's rank. They expressed Sir Hugh's high opinion of his professional

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capacity and conduct; they besought him, for the good of the service, to remain in India; they urged him to accept at Sir Hugh's hands the responsible post of Inspector-General of Cavalry; and promised, if he would forego his intention of returning to England, and would listen to Sir Hugh's proposal, that no exertion should be omitted on his Excellency's part to induce H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge to ratify the proposed appointment. And this invitation was actually addressed by the exalted author of the "Remarks on the Mhow Court-Martial" to the incompetent individual who had so signally failed to tame "the turbulent spirits" of the 6th Dragoons—to the military bungler, who was preparing to foist upon his unlucky successor a mob of bad riders, and lame and neglected cattle, officered by a gang of lazy, untruthful and quarrelsome conspirators.

It was not to be expected that the gentlemen whose professional and private character had been thus gravely impugned by Colonel Crawley, and who had been thus publicly reprimanded by Sir Hugh Rose, should accept censures so severe in resigned silence; especially when they felt that they did not deserve them, and that their complete justification was easy. No great time elapsed, therefore, before H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge was enabled by their explanations to draw up and publish his memorandum of the 18th December, 1862, in which full justice was done to the reputation of the Inniskilling Dragoons, and to the officers who had preceded Colonel Crawley in the command of that corps. His Royal Highness, while recording his opinion that Captain Smales had undoubtedly been guilty of insubordinate conduct, expressed his entire disbelief of the many calumnies in which Colonel Crawley had indulged against the regiment under his charge. His Royal Highness declared that he had before him convincing proofs that when Colonel Crawley took over the 6th Dragoons from Colonel Shute, that regiment was in the highest state of discipline and efficiency; he added that if it had since become disorganized, the blame must rest with Colonel Crawley alone; and he stated that there was not "a shadow of foundation" for the charge of conspiracy, by means of which Colonel Crawley had managed to neutralize before the court-martial evidence which must otherwise have proved fatal to his case.

Nothing could be more complete and satisfactory than his Royal Highness's memorandum, as far as the past was concerned; but, unfortunately, nothing could well be weaker or less satisfactory than the conclusion at which it arrived as to the future. His Royal Highness decided that Colonel Crawley, the officer whose want of tact and temper had in a few months thoroughly disorganized one of the best regiments in the service—who had groundlessly defamed his predecessor in command—and who had imprisoned with unprecedented severity, on a charge for which there was not "a shadow of foundation," the best of his non-commissioned officers—should nevertheless retain his position "on trial" at the head of that unlucky corps.

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Inadequate as this conclusion was, it is possible that the matter might have ended here; that Colonel Crawley might have mended his ways for awhile, and then have slipped quietly out of the service into private life, and been heard of no more, had not the deplorable incident with which Mr. Dudley Fortescue has made everybody familiar by his simple and pathetic statement in the House of Commons, deeply engraven the whole affair upon the public mind.

The details of this incident I will recapitulate briefly from Mr. Fortescue's speech, of which Lord Hartington has admitted the substantial accuracy:—

When Colonel Crawley, "acting on information given to him," discovered that the testimony of the leading non-commissioned officers of his regiment was likely to be adverse to his case, he seems to have felt the importance of neutralizing it somehow or other. And it was by no means easy to do so. They were all men of good character, and Regimental Sergeant-Major John Lilley, who had been at their head for seven years, has been certified by the two commanding officers under whom he had served before Colonel Crawley got the regiment, to have been a soldier of extraordinary merit during his whole career.* The evidence of such a witness would, in all probability, have been decisive of the disputed point of Colonel Crawley's presence on parade; it was, therefore, disposed of by the following process. A sergeant-major named Moreton, who had originally offered himself as a witness for the defence, was by some means or other induced to turn round and "inform on his comrades," and to declare to Colonel Crawley that John Lilley and two other sergeant-majors, named Wakefield and Duval, had read a portion of the prisoner's defence before it was delivered, and had made use of disrespectful language against their colonel in his hearing. Of the inducements by which this revelation was

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* The friends of the late Sergeant-Major Lilley have obtained the following testimonials from Colonels White and Shute, who are described by the Commander-in-Chief in his memorandum of the 18th December, 1862, as "two distinguished officers in whom his Royal Highness has great confidence:"—

"I had the highest opinion of Sergeant-Major Lilley. I remember him joining as a recruit in 1843 or 44. He was then placed in my troop, and I think I recommended him for his first promotion. From the day I first saw him, till I left the Inniskillings in 1858, I can truly say that I never met a more sober, honest, and excellent soldier; and I had the satisfaction of promoting him to be regimental sergeant-major when I was in command of the regiment.

(Signed) "H. D. White."

"I have very great pleasure in testifying to the very high opinion I have ever entertained of Regimental Sergeant-Major Lilley, late of the Inniskilling Dragoons. I knew him well during his whole service in the army. He was for a long time in my troop when I was a captain, and was regimental sergeant-major during the whole time I commanded the regiment. I considered him one of the most straightforward, truthful, and worthy men I ever knew, thoroughly sober and trustworthy, an excellent soldier, and respected by all who knew him.

(Signed) "C. Shute, *Colonel 4th Dragoon Guards.*"

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obtained from Moreton, or of the character which that informer bore in the regiment, I know nothing; nor do I clearly understand the nature of the crime committed by the sergeant-majors in reading Captain Smales' defence. Neither can I believe that rough and hasty words spoken in confidence amongst friends and comrades, respecting such a commanding officer as his Royal Highness's memorandum shows Colonel Crawley to have been, can have been really held to constitute a military offence of a very serious nature, even supposing that the informer Moreton spoke the truth. I do know, however, that as soon as John Lilley died, the informer was rewarded by promotion to the post vacated by his death, which he still holds. "More precise information" was subsequently collected by Colonel Crawley from other sources; and for the extraordinary latitude which the colonel allowed himself in concocting "precise information" to establish his case, I refer to Lieutenant Fitzsimon's evidence (p. 71). Lilley and his comrades were then brought separately to Colonel Crawley's private house, and were there interrogated by him in presence of two of the principal witnesses for the prosecution. Neither of the field officers of the regiment nor the adjutant was allowed to be present in order to see that the men had fair play; and under such inquisitorial pressure they are stated by Colonel Crawley and his friends to have made "confessions."

On evidence thus illegally extorted, Colonel Crawley declared himself determined to bring, at some future time, charges of conspiracy against Lilley, Wakefield, and Duval. In the meantime, he prevailed on General Farrell to allow him to place the men in close arrest. This occurred on the 26th of April, 1862—the court-martial having commenced its proceedings on the 1st of that month. Two days afterwards, on the 28th, General Farrell wrote to Sir William Mansfield, the Commander-in-Chief at Bombay, informing him of the steps which had been taken by Colonel Crawley and himself, and forwarding the "confessions" and other evidence on which the prosecutor professed to be anxious to found charges of conspiracy against the three sergeant-majors. Sir William replied that no charge of any kind could possibly be established on such evidence; but, at the same time, we are told by Lord Hartington, that he committed the unfortunate error of allowing the prisoners to be retained in close arrest until the court-martial should be concluded. The court had then sat twenty-two days. The issue was one which any civil court would have readily disposed of in a few hours; and Sir William has since explained that he did not anticipate that the illegal order which he gave could have possibly prolonged the imprisonment of the men many days or even hours, and that he had no conception of the "penal nature" of the confinement to which they would be subjected.

Circumstances, however, arising from the intolerably tedious nature of the proceedings of courts-martial in the British service, protracted the trial from the 1st of April to the 7th of June. Wakefield and Duval were then discharged, after forty days of solitary confinement. Lilley had, in

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the meantime, died in arrest. And no wonder. The Indian summer was at its height, a season during which European constitutions can ill support the suffocating heat, even when surrounded by all the luxuries and comforts which wealth, liberty, and leisure can contribute towards its alleviation. During that terrible time, John Lilley had been kept by Colonel Crawley a close prisoner in his quarters, under circumstances of peculiar aggravation. He was a tall, stout, healthy man, 37 years of age, accustomed, in the daily discharge of his duty, to a life of unceasing activity. He had married in 1860 a young wife, and she had borne him two children—who had both died a few weeks before the trial of Captain Smales at Mhow. During his long arrest, Mrs. Lilley, herself in the last stage of consumption, shared his imprisonment. They were lodged in a single room, rather less than fifteen feet square, which had originally been a stable. Here Lilley and his wife languished for upwards of a month, the husband tending the dying woman. A sentry placed outside the open archway which served as an entrance to the stable, was ordered to allow of no communication from without. One day the wife of a sergeant named Gibson stopped at the door of Mrs. Lilley's prison, gave her a few flowers, and spoke to her a few words of pity and consolation. Colonel Crawley heard of this, and orders were immediately issued, that the sentry, who up to that time had been stationed outside the room, should thenceforward be posted within it, so that he might constantly keep John Lilley, and, consequently, his wife—who was afflicted with chronic diarrhœa—under his eyes, by night as well as by day. In that fearful atmosphere—for many days and nights, in the presence of a succession of strange men, unceasingly pacing up and down the centre of the small foul chamber—every function of nature had to be performed by the wretched invalid. It is quite true that the poor young creature might readily have avoided all this misery and shame had she chosen to do so. She might have caused herself to be removed to the regimental hospital, where she would have been decently waited upon by persons of her own sex, properly lodged, and tenderly treated. But she was a wife and a mother; she had just lost both her children; she knew, moreover, that she herself was not long for this world, and that if she allowed herself to be separated from her husband in his adversity, she should, in all probability, never see him again. Wives and mothers will, therefore, readily understand how it came to pass that Clarissa Lilley clung to the father of her dead little ones, and patiently elected to endure even the terrible indignities I have described, in order to secure to herself the melancholy consolation of dying in his arms.

It is mortifying to have to record that the members of the Mhow Court-martial might have prevented the infliction of much of this misery, and might probably have saved John Lilley's life, had they thought it worth their while to interfere.

When Lilley, in reply to a question put to him by the prisoner, described to Lieutenant-Colonel Payn and his colleagues his cruel posi-

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tion, saying, "A sentry is placed at my bedroom door, where my sick wife is now lying; the door is quite open; the sentry is posted but two feet from my bed," it might have been anticipated that some one out of those fifteen officers and gentlemen would have been moved to generous indignation and remonstrance by the pitiable plaint. But if the Mhow Blue Book is to be believed, the matter was passed over by the court as not calling for any particular notice on their part, and Lilley, having given his evidence, was marched back to his prison to rejoin his wife, and to die with her.

For three weeks more did these poor people linger on as best they might, and then the man died, and the woman was removed to the quarters of a friend, where, after a few days, she died too; and the whole family—husband, wife, and children—now lie buried in the churchyard at Mhow.

The following simple and tender letter, written by John Lilley's wife, the day before her own death, will afford some idea of the kindly and patient nature of the victims whose sad fate has been here described. It is difficult to conceive that the gentle sentiments which it breathes can have emanated from the wife of a dangerous and foul-mouthed conspirator:—

My dear Sister and Brother,—

This is indeed a painful moment—a task I never expected to have to tell you. My beloved husband is no more. He died of apoplexy on the morning of the 25th of May. It was so sudden; he was tolerably well the day before. Dear sister, in mercy go to our father and mother, I cannot write to them. The blow will be too much for them. I am staying with Sergeant-Major Cotton and Mrs. Cotton. I was to have gone into hospital, but doctor says I shall not last long, so I don't think I shall be removed before anything happens. I cannot write any more; I cannot sit up. My best love. Your loving and affectionate sister,

Mhow, June 7. Clarissa Lilley.

A complaint has recently been made that the British public has reserved all its sympathy for the Lilley family, and has abstained from any expression of regret at the severe domestic affliction to which Colonel Crawley alluded, when he complained to the court-martial at Mhow that "the upas-like shadow of Captain Smales had fallen on his threshold, and had converted his heretofore happy home into a scene of mourning and woe."—(p. 171.) It is perhaps as well, therefore, to explain that Colonel Crawley was bereaved of his mother-in-law whilst the Mhow Court-martial was sitting, and that he thus informed Colonel Payn and his colleagues that the unlucky paymaster of his regiment ought to be considered responsible for the melancholy event.

On the very day on which Clarissa Lilley was painfully penning her last farewell to her family and friends, Colonel Crawley was addressing the court-martial at Mhow in reply. His main object was to convince the court that the prisoner's witnesses had deliberately perjured themselves. Lilley had at that time been dead twelve days. The regimental surgeon had formally reported that he considered the man's death to have been

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mainly caused by the mental and bodily sufferings consequent on his wife's illness and his own long imprisonment, and Sir William Mansfield had communicated to Colonel Crawley, more than a month before, his decision that there was no evidence which would afford a chance of convicting the sergeant-majors of conspiracy. All these important points appear to have been withheld from the knowledge of the court, for, in Colonel Crawley's reply, that officer stated that he had passed by the evidence of the three sergeant-majors as unworthy of notice, "because they had all three been guilty of conspiracy against him." And the members of the court-martial, ignorant, it is to be hoped, of the long and honourable career of the man who was thus defamed, of his spotless character, and of the circumstances under which he had just perished, seem to have listened with approving credulity to the groundless calumnies which the prosecutor thus found it expedient to heap on the dead soldier's memory.

It is but fair that Colonel Crawley should enjoy whatever advantage may accrue to him from the tardy explanation which he at last thought fit to volunteer respecting the manner in which the Lilleys had been treated whilst under arrest. Had he pleased he might have made this explanation on the 7th of May, when Lilley first complained of his wife's cruel position to the court, and when both the sergeant-major and the adjutant of the regiment were under his cross-examination. He preferred, however, to take no notice of it for a month; and on the 7th of June, the last day on which the court sat, he observed, in his reply, that "close arrest necessarily implies a sentry over a prisoner, but it does not necessitate his being placed over a prisoner's wife and family." "I can assure the court," said Colonel Crawley, "that no person could be more shocked than I was, when I learnt from the evidence of Sergeant-Major Lilley that his wife had been incommoded or annoyed by the precaution taken for his safe custody. It was Lieutenant and Adjutant Fitzsimon's fault, if any such thing occurred; for it was his duty, as adjutant, to have seen the post assigned to the sentry, and to have taken care that no such improper interference with the privacy of the sergeant-major's wife could have taken place. As it was, the moment I became acquainted with the statement of Sergeant-Major Lilley, I sent off orders to have the sentry removed to a part where he could perform his duty equally well, without interfering with or annoying Mrs. Lilley."

Until Sir Hugh Rose's "Remarks" on the Mhow Court-martial were promulgated, the various officers, whose characters were affected by the unsupported statements which Colonel Crawley had introduced into his reply, had no means of knowing how far those statements had obtained credit with the higher authorities. When, however, Lieutenant and Adjutant Fitzsimon discovered that the Commander-in-Chief in India, without calling upon him for any explanation, had publicly reprimanded him on his colonel's mere assertion that he was the person responsible for the treatment to which the Lilleys had been subjected during their arrest,

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he adopted the only legitimate course open to him in order to clear his character from the imputation. He drew up a letter, cautiously and respectfully worded, firmly denying the truth of the grave charge which Colonel Crawley had made against him, and which had drawn down upon him Sir Hugh Rose's public displeasure. He affirmed that in his dealings towards the late Sergeant-Major Lilley and his wife he had simply carried out the orders which he had received from his commanding officer; and he pointed out that these orders had been given in the presence of several witnesses, who could be referred to. He further explained, that there was not, and never had been, any foundation for the assertion that his eyesight was defective; and that three medical men, who had recently examined his eyes, had certified that his vision was in no way impaired.*

This letter, dated November 3, 1862, Lieutenant Fitzsimon requested the acting adjutant of the 6th Dragoons—for he himself had been suspended from the adjutancy—to forward through the proper channels to the Commander-in-Chief for his Excellency's information. No official notice of it was taken by Colonel Crawley for more than a fortnight. On the 17th of November, Lieutenant Fitzsimon was sent for to his colonel's house, where a letter was read to him by order of General Farrell, informing him that his statements were insubordinate, and that he ought to be thankful for being allowed an opportunity of withdrawing them. The letter concluded by desiring that Lieutenant Fitzsimon would decide on the spot whether he would withdraw them or not. Lieutenant Fitzsimon—intimidated, as well he might be, by the proceedings of the Mhow Court-martial and by the Commander-in-Chief's remarks thereupon—replied, that as General Farrell pronounced his statements to be insubordinate, he had no choice but to withdraw them; which he accordingly did in a second letter, dated November 19; specifying, however, in his second letter, the reason which had induced him to withdraw the first. Upon the receipt of this second letter, Colonel Crawley again sent for Lieutenant Fitzsimon, and read to him a portion of a private letter from the Assistant Adjutant-General at Mhow, conveying General Farrell's desire that the second letter should be withdrawn, and a third letter written, in which the reason which had induced Lieutenant Fitzsimon to withdraw the first letter should be omitted.

This was done, the third letter being dated November 21, 1862; and immediately afterwards Lieutenant Fitzsimon placed his powers of eyesight beyond dispute, by obtaining from the musketry instructor at Mhow a certificate as a first-class shot at 600 yards.

These details and these dates have been given, because it is desirable, if any means are in future to be conceded to inferior officers by which they

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Dublin, August 10, 1862.

* I certify that I have carefully examined and tested Lieutenant and Adjutant Fitzsimon's (6th Dragoons) eyes, and find that he is not short-sighted, nor in any way affected with defective vision.

(Signed) W. R. Wilde, *Surgeon Oculist in Ireland to Her Majesty.*

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may obtain redress for wrong done them by their superiors, that the correspondence to which I have adverted should be produced before the inquiry which is about to take place. General Farrell's own account of the transaction—read to the House of Commons by Colonel Barttelot—varies materially from the details given above. It denies that any letters were written by General Farrell's orders on the subject, and declares that that officer merely offered a friendly verbal recommendation to Lieutenant Fitzsimon to withdraw his letter of the 3rd November, because the general, oddly enough, considered it disrespectful—not to Colonel Crawley, whom it accused of deliberate falsehood on two points, but to Sir Hugh Rose.

The circumstances connected with the death of Sergeant-Major Lilley excited considerable notice both in India and in England, the more especially as that catastrophe was attributed by Sir Hugh Rose in his "Remarks" to the drunken habits of the deceased. A bill for twenty-four bottles of spirits had been sent in by a native dealer to Lilley's representatives after the sergeant-major's death, and a copy of it had been privately communicated to Sir Hugh Rose, who forthwith assumed that the whole of this liquor must have been consumed by the unhappy man during the period of his arrest, and reproved the surgeon of the regiment for having been ignorant of the fact, and for having erroneously attributed his death to grief and confinement. Had Sir Hugh taken the trouble to examine the bill, he would have seen that nine bottles out of the twenty-four had been supplied to Lilley before his arrest, and that two others had been charged to him after he had been struck down by apoplexy; had he made proper and reasonable inquiry before he branded the man as a suicidal drunkard in the face of his comrades and of the whole army, he would have learnt that the greater part, if not the whole, of the remainder had been administered to Mrs. Lilley by medical prescription—the poor woman having with difficulty been kept alive for many weeks by large doses of the strongest stimulants.

H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge, in his memorandum of the 18th December, 1862, has done full justice to Lilley's character on this point, and it is to be hoped that a subject so painful to his friends will be allowed to rest. But if it be revived, it ought to be sifted to the bottom, no loose assertions ought to be permitted to tarnish the memory of that good and unfortunate soldier, and the character and evidence of any witness who may be produced on the subject ought to be tested by the most rigid inquiry and cross-examination; for, if Colonel Crawley is to be believed, tampering with witnesses is a practice not entirely unknown in the British army, and both officers and privates are occasionally susceptible of pressure, and accessible to temptation from high and influential quarters.

While Captain Smales was engaged in defending himself under extraordinary difficulties before the court-martial at Mhow, Colonel Crawley seized the embarrassing opportunity of instituting an inquiry into the paymaster's accounts. The majority, if not the whole, of the committee

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selected by Colonel Crawley for this purpose, was composed of witnesses for the prosecution on the trial which was at the time pending; one of them being, of course, the husband of the lady who had originated the moral and social difficulty in the regiment, and who was, consequently, an avowed enemy of Captain Smales. The poor paymaster objected, as well he might, to the constitution of this committee, and appealed in vain to General Farrell against it. The result of the inquiry was, nevertheless, creditable to Captain Smales, whose testimonials of former good service, and whose appointment to the 6th Dragoons in 1858, prove, that until he was thrown in contact with Colonel Crawley, he had been looked upon favourably by the War-Office. And although a disposition appears to exist at the present moment to affix on Captain Smales the imputation of inaccuracy, or worse, in his accounts, certain it is that no open charge of the kind has been ventured against him by anybody, and that he is here in London, pertinaciously challenging inquiry, and failing to obtain it. If the late paymaster of the 6th Dragoons is a defaulter, he is a very singular one. He will not abscond, as defaulters in general are but too eager to do; he will not even enjoy his ill-gotten gains—if ill-gotten gains he has—in prudent silence. He is eternally hammering at the door of the War-Office, bothering the private secretaries, worrying Sir Edward Lugard, and writing vehement letters in the newspapers. The authorities at the War-Office are surely bound, in justice both to the public purse and to the unlucky paymaster himself, either to give him a clean bill of health and to admit that they have no claims against him, or to take him and his sureties into a court of law, and enforce whatever claims they really have. It is ungenerous thus to raise doubts as to his integrity as a paymaster, in order to prejudice the other points which are in dispute as to the treatment he has received at the hands of Colonel Crawley and the Mhow court-martial.

Mr. Smales' present position is curiously anomalous. The Mhow court-martial sentenced him to be cashiered on the 9th of June, 1862, and Sir Hugh Rose confirmed the sentence on the 11th of July. His appeal to H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge failed, and, a year afterwards, on the 31st of May, 1863, Captain Smales was gazetted out of the 6th Dragoons and his successor appointed. But, on the 4th of the following June, the Deputy Judge Advocate wrote to Mr. Smales to inform him that "all the papers relative to his case had just been submitted to the Judge Advocate-General for his consideration;" an intimation which certainly savours of the sharp criminal practice formerly known in the North as "Jedburgh justice," by which prisoners used to be hanged first and tried afterwards. On the 29th of the same month, Lord Hartington informed the House of Commons that the Judge Advocate-General, having had all the papers connected with the case before him, had at last come to the astonishing conclusion that the sentence which had been passed on Mr. Smales was a legal sentence. It was to be supposed, therefore, that no more would be heard of that unfortunate gentleman. But in less than a month Mr. Smales' head appeared above water again, and the public learnt from a private source

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that the Judge Advocate-General had obtained further information from India which had compelled him to reverse his previous decision, that Mr. Smales' sentence was, after all, illegal, and that he had consequently been pardoned. The paymaster's friends were, however, hardly allowed time to congratulate him on this unexpected turn in his affairs, before another letter from Sir Edward Lugard appeared, explaining to the perplexed paymaster that the pardon which he had received was an honorary and theoretical pardon as it were—for that it was only to date from the day after that on which the punishment to which he had been sentenced should have been fully carried out; and that he was to receive neither arrears of pay, nor half-pay, nor future employment, but was to remain for the rest of his life, thanks to the mercy of his Sovereign, a ruined, though pardoned, civilian.

The result of this blundering injustice will be that the Judge Advocate-General will elevate an obscure and not altogether blameless individual to the dignity of a martyred innocent, and that the War-Office and the public will hear a good deal more of Mr. Smales before they have done with him. Nor do the military authorities deserve much sympathy under the infliction which they are thus perversely drawing down upon themselves. It is manifestly unjust that a man should be punished for a crime of which he has been illegally convicted, under the pretence that he has probably committed a crime of quite a different nature which his opponents appear afraid to press against him; and it is as manifestly indecent that her Majesty's pardon should thus be ingeniously distorted by the law advisers of the Crown into an indirect instrument of punishment.

I cannot conclude this paper without earnestly calling the attention of those whom it may concern to the antiquated, cumbrous, and impotent machinery, by means of which the administration of justice is still attempted in the British service. Courts-martial are, to all intents and purposes, courts of law; they ought not to be swayed by any sentimental or conventional notions of honour or professional usage; and should be conducted strictly according to the established rules of British jurisprudence, save where the Mutiny Act has otherwise ordered. But no law reform has yet been permitted to penetrate within their narrow and obscure precincts. The wholesome rays of publicity illumine and ventilate their proceedings only on extreme occasions, such as that which is just now under consideration. The curative operation of legal criticism is never openly and fairly applied to them; and they continue in the present day to blunder and grope in the dark for their verdicts, precisely as they did one hundred years ago. An intolerable dilatoriness of proceeding, a tendency to diverge into irrelevant issues, an absence of all rapid and effective cross-examination, and a readiness to admit evidence which ought to be rejected, and to reject evidence which ought to be received, form but a few of the many deplorable characteristics which distinguish these feeble and unsatisfactory tribunals. The officers who serve

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on them, and the officers whose duty it is, as acting judge-advocates, to direct them, are too often themselves completely ignorant of the laws of the land and of the rules of evidence, and are sadly prone to grasp at the conclusions towards which their professional instincts and prejudices point, without taking common care that their verdicts are borne out by the evidence which has been submitted to them. What a cynical French writer has asserted of the majority of his countrywomen, "*Qu'elles n'ont point de principes, elles se conduisent par le cœur*," may with far more truth be said of most of our courts-martial, which constantly convict prisoners because they wish to convict them, and not because the charges upon which they have been arraigned have been legally proved. It is remarkable, too, that the habit of "hard swearing," a crime which in our civil courts bears the uglier name of perjury, does not draw down from British courts-martial upon the officers and gentlemen who indulge in it the same stern meed of censure and punishment which is invariably awarded to it in civil courts by the Judges of the land. One would almost be inclined to suspect, so lightly is that evil practice viewed in military circles, that, as easy-going moralists hold it to be scarcely a crime for a man of pleasure to forswear himself in defence of a frail fair one's fame, so our courts-martial consider that a moderate amount of "hard swearing" in support of a patron, or of "the interests of discipline," is a comparatively venial offence, of which no serious notice is taken in that revised and mitigated version of the Decalogue, which men of honour of a certain class are in the habit of constructing for themselves, in lieu of the sterner and less convenient Mosaic original. Such, at least, is the only way in which the frightful amount of perjury can be accounted for, which disfigures the proceedings of so many of our courts-martial, and which invariably escapes the censure, and even the notice, of the court, provided always the "hard swearing" be on the side of authority and power. Both in the Robertson-Bentinck case in Dublin, and in this recent trial at Mhow, the prosecutors openly imputed that crime to the prisoners' witnesses, without making any serious effort to establish the terrible charge; and the court on both occasions listened to the unsupported calumny in approving silence, and endorsed it by their verdicts, which, as soon as they were tested by impartial and competent legal criticism, were reluctantly, but necessarily, set aside.

The number of troops stationed in England is so small, and the influences of society are so strong and binding on their officers, that military trials on subjects of importance are comparatively rare in this country. When, however, they do occur, the usual result is, either that an unpopular or obscure prisoner is treated with signal injustice, especially if he belong to the non-combatant branches of the service; or, more frequently, that military crime goes entirely unpunished, by reason of the incompetence or the partiality of the court. But it is in India, and in our more distant colonies, that the defects of our system of military law are most saliently illustrated. The size of our armies in the Indian presidencies, the vast area

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over which they are scattered, the distance from head-quarters, the consequent relaxation of discipline, and many other obvious causes calculated to engender the commission of military crime, afford ample opportunities for testing its inefficiency. It would be well worth the while of any Member of Parliament, ambitious of rendering a good service to his country, to cause the records of the Judge Advocate's offices in London and in Calcutta to be searched, and a collection to be made of the many instances in which, during the last twenty-five years, notorious and avowed failures of justice have resulted from the ignorance, caprice, and *lâches* of courts-martial. The mere statistics of these cases, together with the remarks and subsequent decision of the superior authorities thereupon, would certainly raise a universal cry for reform. Great as the existing evil is, and powerful as are the professional prejudices by which it will probably be supported, there exists a sovereign specific for it ready to our hands—a specific which has of late years been tried in many analogous cases, and usually with immediate and complete success. A public inquiry into the working of our present system of military jurisprudence, by a Parliamentary Committee or a Royal Commission, is all that is required, in order to bring about a more satisfactory state of things. And it will indeed be discreditable to the present Government, if such a cruel, disastrous, and costly complication as that which has been occasioned by the misconduct of the late court-martial at Mhow, is permitted to pass away, without some endeavour to extract permanent good out of the great wrong which has just been perpetrated in the outraged name of Military Justice.

October 15, 1863. J. O.

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Margaret Denzil's History.

(*Annotated by her Husband.*)

CHAPTER I.

In the Beginning.

How my history was begun for me—that is to say, where I was born and who were my parents—is doubtful still, I sometimes think. Only this I have found out for certain—that in life as well as in story-telling the beginning is very important, and that a good ending can scarcely come of a bad beginning. Not we, but our fathers and mothers begin our lives; and if we are to do well, that is a thing they ought to be very careful about. Careful that there is no guilt, no secrecy; careful to put an untangled thread into our hands when we are to carry on for ourselves, and not a tangled one which is a great task and a heavy shame.

We shall see presently whether I have been reasonably accounted for. But, to begin, I do not think I ever believed myself really the child of Richard and Elizabeth Forster, cottagers of the New Forest. In the first place I never loved them; and though they lived in great seclusion, I had opportunities enough of seeing there was something between other parents and their children, some indescribable sense of loving and belonging, which there was not in our home. But then there was not much of that between my father and mother themselves; and I used to think at a very early age indeed that it was their having me that made the difference.

In the next place, there was that about the very house which made it seem to me not my home. Had it been a cottage like other cottages, with thatched roof and diamond-paned windows, and climbing plants hanging from the walls, and bow-pots, and a garden of flowers, that would have satisfied me; but all the instincts of my nature revolted against what it was. It was not like a cottage at all. Much more did it resemble a slice of a barrack—so formal and heavy, with its walls of dull red brick, its cold slate roof on which no bird ever alighted, and its narrow windows viciously staring like little Malayan eyes without eyebrows. There was not a flower nor a shrub about it—nothing prettier than a patch of house-leek that squatted like a toad over the sentry-box which shaded the doorway. My natural home was not like that; and I remember no time in my life when I did not think so, in a dim discontented way.

Again, I have not made out that the children of English peasants are often educated in French convent schools; and yet I was sent to one of

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At the Brook

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those places, not to "finish," but to learn my A B C. How much I should have preferred the free ignorance of the village school to becoming accomplished, as the foolish word is, amidst the dull formality and odious restraints of the prison I was sent to, I alone knew then; how much happier the one lot would have been for me than the other, I best know now.

If I had never asked myself the question why I, a forester's daughter, was sent to a school for gentlewomen, it would have been forced on me—as it was—by the observations of the young ladies my schoolfellows. We were of an age when women have not yet learned to sting with words smeared with the honey of sympathy, and the sneers which were ever ready for me in our hours of recreation were crude indeed. I understood, but was not ashamed; that is to say, I understood that I was out of my sphere amongst the young ladies, and I vehemently agreed with them: as an unfledged hawk in similar case might agree with a colony of town-made pigeons. I complained to my mistresses, telling them I would rather go back and live wild amongst the trees where I was born; but got nothing by way of comfort but gentle remonstrance and severe discipline. I was to have patience: I was to subdue the unruly spirit which unhappily had been implanted in my breast. Above all things, I was to be silent. Meanwhile, an extra task would be good for me, they thought.

The English governess, to whom I naturally turned for kindness most confidently, was sterner than the rest. *They* put me aside with cold evasive gentleness; she would listen to me with a fixed attention which gave me more eloquence than I knew how to control. But in the midst of my petulant questions (which were never answered), and through the mist which passionate railing brings before the railer's eyes, I could always see her face growing darker and more rigid, till she stopped me in full career with a stern, "Silence, Miss Forster; I have heard enough. Go and forget what you have said." And yet she was often much affected, evidently; and at times (when we happened to be alone together, and her English pride was not brought out by the observation of others, as I supposed) she behaved to me with a grave kindness which made amends for all. Even then, however, I wondered whether she did not really hate and despise me, and only tried to be kind because her heart was touched by my friendlessness, or because she was ashamed of her own unreasonable hate. But I was not the less grateful on that account, and readily set off every chance word of sympathy from her English lips against her general show of aversion. I remember to this hour being quite melted by the half-audible exclamation, "Poor little wretch!" as she left the closet where she had to place me for insubordination one day. I remember most of all an evening when she invited me into her room to help her arrange her drawers. A delightful task! a delightful evening! She gave me a pretty little box, and into the box put whatever stray morsels of hopeless trinket-rubbish I took a fancy to. To crown all, she gave me a key to lock the box; and I locked it; and next day lost the

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key, and was afraid or ashamed to reveal my misfortune. So the box remained locked—and was presently forgotten.

And my great question remained unanswered—to trouble me even when, during holiday vacations spent at home, I was at liberty to wander all day long amidst the enchantments of the forest. I plucked up heart to interrogate my father: he seemed to wonder how the question had got into my head, shook his own, and answered very kindly that if I did not wish to be kept at school always I had better hold my tongue. This terrible threat silenced me altogether; for I dare not question my mother. But she knew what I would have asked, for all that. More than once when we sat together by the evening fire she had seen the inquiry on my lips, and had killed it there with a look which had a world of warning in it. The first time warning; the second, menace.

But my parents were kind to me on the whole, especially my father. It was he who taught me the paths in the wood, and the sweet old-fashioned country names of its flowers and grasses. He it was who filled my mind with many a forest legend, very incredible and nonsensically meaning. Of how here a brother tore a brother in pieces, and went home and said it was wolves; and straightway was compelled by some spirit that possessed him to go down on all fours and howl, and would not leave off; so they were obliged to kill him. And how there in another place where the grass would not grow, a young lady was bound to a tree by wicked men who slew her lover before her eyes, and wrote his name across her bare bosom with his blood. And how the blood never could be washed from it; only whenever any of the cruel murderers came to his dying hour the letters faded from her bosom for the time and came out all wet on his. And how when the last of the wicked ones perished the name faded away for the last time on *his* breast, and never came back to poor Barbara's any more: "and they do say," added my father, with a look of awe, "that one of them ruffians was her own sister in disguise!" In this monstrous old story there is an ending of forgiveness and peace which makes me hope it may be true; and I half believe it is.

The story is memorable to me, however, for a more particular reason. I first heard it, under the "very tree," on the morning of a certain day: my own story commenced in the evening, or rather I took it up then; having lived up to that time the life that was made for me, and become a tall awkward girl of thirteen. Nobody had ever said I was beautiful yet; and so I suppose all my loveliness had to come.

I had been rambling in the forest till evening, mazed with the fine fancies and wandering thoughts of childhood—the thoughts and fancies of a mind like that of the Greek girls who saw actual life in every tree, and watched for water nymphs at every pool. Presently I came to a stream, and sat down beside it. The water rolled over the worn white stones, and round about those that were great and mossy green, with a noise which at first grew louder and louder as it seized upon my senses, and then fainter as it hushed them into a deeper trance. The sun set quite, and still I

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remained by the side of the stream. The moon came up as the sun went down—a bright white moon; and it was not till my shadow began to show distinctly on the water that I rose up, in that state of double consciousness when the senses seem to think for themselves, and to leave the mind to its own indulgences. At such times we hardly know what we do till it is done; just as, at ordinary times, we know not what we think till the thought is gone.

What *I* did was to lace my shoes round my neck, and step out into the brook, where I leapt from stone to stone, or waded along the pebbly bottom. Whither the brook went I knew no more than its waters did, and thought and cared no more. *I* was the brook, and away I danced accordingly, only pausing now and then when a bird broke suddenly into song, as birds will do on moonlight nights: when he ceased, then I went on again.

At first, all about me was open glade—the sward vividly green, the water diamond white, especially where it circled round the stones or my feet disturbed it. By-and-by, however, the glade began to narrow. Trees drew nearer to the stream on either side, and presently I came to a place in its path which was quite overshadowed by branches. But the branches were high, there were many breaks between them, and the moon shone through, making a thousand fantastic patches of light upon the water and upon the grass. This was more beautiful and enchanting still! The very brook seemed to rejoice in this place with a quicker, louder voice; while as for me, I had once heard a ballad about "lovely night;" and as I went along now I found myself singing these two words in my heart continually—not to the ballad-maker's tune, though, but to a new one.

A little farther, and we were both silent—the brook and I. For there was a surprise for us at this point. The boughs gradually came down close upon the stream, making it very dark.* That, however, did not bring me to a pause. Gaily I pushed my way through, and instantly found myself at the edge of a break in the copse which the waters quite filled—an oval space where they suddenly composed themselves and became a still little lake. Right above it stood the moon. The leaves glistened, the waters shone, but the banks which skirted the pool under the leaves were in darkness. I, however, who stood in darkness too, could see how invitingly these banks, broken by tree-boles and bushes, rose from the water in softly swelling knolls, and I longed to be there. And luckily the pond was shallow, or only deep in the middle; and so I waded round by the margin, and went and sat upon a pretty bit of bank between two trees. There I remained I do not know how long—the scene was so very beautiful, and every sound so soothing.

But when a leaf fell by-and-by, and floated past, "Let us bathe," said my limbs one to another. Said and done. Without any consideration

* When I visited this place a little while after the time my dear madame is writing about, I strongly suspected the bushes here had been *planted*. There was no getting at the pond hardly, except by the way she got at it.—J. D.

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at all, I soon found myself naked in the warm night air and the still waters of the brook.

You must know that I had acquired enough of the art of swimming not to be afraid of a few feet of deep water; and as the pool was nowhere more than twenty yards across, I waded fearlessly out toward the centre. The water did deepen there, far more than I dreamed as I floated over it, with my face turned upward to the moon. Floating sometimes, wading sometimes, sometimes standing hip-deep, very, very still, that, with my hair gathered from my ears, I might listen to the woodland sounds that swept by in waves of increasing and decreasing sweetness—thus passed the time away. To me it might all have been a moment; but the moon went on steadily, marking the departing minutes by a shadow drawn over the pool like a shroud. The darkness crept over from the side whence I had started; and being now inclined to rest, I crossed to the opposite bank, and sat down, watching the shadow as it came.

I see myself sitting there, my face in shade, my feet dangling in the water. The moon goes on her way overhead, till at length, by extending my foot, I can almost hide it in the advancing darkness. And a pretty pastime it was to measure off in this way the course of night; but pleasanter still to think of nothing at all, but sit paddling in the water.

That was not to last long, however. As I drew my foot idly along the bottom, it caught in what I thought were weeds; I drew up my foot; and dimly saw clinging to it what was not a weed. It looked to me like a tangled hank of lace; but while I stared at it, it slipped from my foot, leaving there a broken string of beads, which also dropt from the string one by one into the water. Before I could recover from my surprise only two or three were left—those which crossed my foot and lodged there.

I say surprise, but that is a feeble word. As I took those two or three great beads into my hand, I trembled with a thrill that scattered my dreams instantly, only to let new dreams, new wonders in. The enchantment of delight was dispelled, and was succeeded by the enchantment of terror; and as this new glamour fell upon me, the moon passed over, and was caught into a cloud, and was gone. The pool was dark, and I was dark; all but a strange light that came fresh into my mind as if reflected into it from those dull opaque beads.

In this strange light strange ideas came and went like dumb ghosts that rise from the dead to tell things which they cannot tell—which they can only *look;* and so it happened that, without any process of thought, I, a child of thirteen, felt profoundly that I held a revelation in my hand, if I could only ask and be answered. Shall I say—will it seem so very odd and unnatural if I tell what sort of questioning came into my mind? Well, put into words, it might very well have taken the form of the old troublesome inquiry, "Why am I, a cottager's daughter, sent to a convent school in France?" That was my thought—I need not say what it meant beside! I need only say that what it did mean never fully entered my mind till that moment. It was a question of which I did not know the

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whole significance till now, when I had come upon that which I felt sure could have answered it! Philosophers may explain all this for themselves; for my part, I want no explanation.

Remember that I was a woman-child of thirteen, and imagine the hosts of huge and ghostly shapes that came into my mind with one suspicion—or rather revelation. They were not *thoughts* that troubled me—they were phantoms, and terrible. I think when I die I shall sit naked by another pool, and look upon another dread array of ghosts like that. Why, even then I thought, for one brief moment, that I must have died—I had changed so much—I had become gifted all at once with such wonderful new perceptions; and it was this idea, followed by the discovery that, as yet, I really was alive, that first impelled me to fly from the place. But my clothes were on the further bank—somewhere in the dark where I might never find them! This was a new alarm. Again I plunged into the water, but not before I had tied my necklace round my head, so as to carry it safely over without hampering my hands. Through the shallower places of the pond to the deeper, where (with a great deal of calmness, when it came to that,) I resigned myself to be taken up by the water, to float across as before.

The sky, to which my face was once more turned, still looked bright, I remember, but there was scarcely enough light upon the pool now to show the white mask that moved over it. Very naturally, I suppose, a picture of this face of mine slowly moving over the dark water came into my mind; and it was not a pleasant picture. But no sooner was it there than it changed into another face—also turned skyward from the pool, and looking thither as I had seen no face look yet. It was in my mind. It was on the water floating beside mine own! So I fancied, at any rate; and turned my head in horror to assure myself that it was not so, and sank.

That face, which was only an idea, a phantom, never left me. I cherished it until at last, when my own had changed and had become a woman's, I had no more need to trouble memory about it. If I look in the glass, there is the other face; and if I loose my hair, and look into clear water, there is the vision exactly.

I sank many feet deep, grovelling like a thing already dead upon the pebbly floor. Then I rose again. Drowning people are generally vouchsafed three such chances of life, I believe; luckily, one was enough for me. Gasping into the full consciousness of peril with the first breath of air that touched my lips, I gathered my enfeebled strength into one effort, passed over the treacherous hole, regained my feet, and planted them once more on the safe soft turf.

There, however, I am sure I must have fallen if my hand had not immediately lighted on the homely every-day garments I had cast off—an age? no, not an hour ago. These gave me what I needed so much, an instant hold upon the good commonplace life I had quitted too long; and it may easily be understood how an instinctive eagerness to keep that hold banished every disposition to faint.

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In haste I began to dress myself—in haste to leave a solitude, so rapturous at first, which now oppressed me with stifling dread; for it was as if some invisible wickedness had come and sucked all life and sweetness from the air. If I could find the open glade—that is to say, any open glade—I had no doubt I should soon and easily find my way home; for I knew the place I was now in could not be far from my father's house. That is exactly what I said to myself half aloud; but "my father's house" were words that fell palpably dead from my lips. They *were* dead. I felt I could never utter them again now; and with that I remembered my necklace, and put my hand up to learn whether I had not lost it when I sank. It was there. I took it in my hands that I might examine its beads by the one vivid stream of moonlight which penetrated through the boughs above, and I saw that they were bloody! There was blood upon them, and upon my hand!

How I managed to escape from the place after this dreadful sight (for how should beads be wet with blood that have just come up from twelve feet of water?) I do not know. But I must soon have gained a fair clear break of sward, and there fell down insensible at last.

[As for the blood, it is not to be supposed she could reason about it at such a time. There was nothing mysterious about it, really. When she sank her temple grazed upon the pebbles. When she put up her hand to feel for the necklace it passed over the wound. It is plain enough; but the explanation was never quite enough to satisfy madame; which is not much to be wondered at.—J. D.]

CHAPTER II.

My Stranger.

June nights are short, my exhaustion was great. The swoon passed into sleep, I suppose; but there I lay till after dawn next morning, and even then I did not wake naturally. A man's voice roused me; and I started up trembling with dread, for I thought the voice was my father's. It was not his. The voice belonged to a man on horseback, who had seen me lying half naked on the ground, from one of the forest roads. He was as much frightened as I was.

[And no wonder. With her white face and her white gown, her hair streaming, and an unearthly look in her eyes—which, at *ordinary* times, no man could look into for more than a moment—I confess my sea-bred superstition came in, and I did take her for something supernatural, till I observed one thing: she had caught up her shoes when she ran from the pond, and there they were dangling from her hand.—J. D.]

But the surprise did not last long. I know now (though nobody had

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called me beautiful yet) that I fascinated him, and he is welcome to know that he won my childish confidence by his troubled face, which had in it the more than kindness of a sudden unwilling interest; and it was not an unhandsome face either. But there was much shyness on both sides. He was in no hurry to approach me, and though he called I would not go to him. However, he dismounted at last, and came and questioned me—still at a little distance. What was my name? Margaret Forster. Where did I live? No answer. My hand was bloody, and my forehead; how came I in that plight? I had been bathing; I fell and hurt myself; that was all; and now would he be good enough to go away. But should he not see me safe home? No! The proposition was hateful; and before anything more could be said about it, I ran back into the copse, where I had left half my clothes.

The gentleman did not follow me, and I did not fear that he would. On the contrary, I almost wished he had done so when I again caught sight of that dreadful pool. And yet how little dreadful it seemed now, with the tender innocent light of early morning shining on it, and a hundred birds twittering in the boughs, which here and there bent down and dipped their leaves in its waters. I thought I should be afraid to stand on its brink again, but I was not. Only one thing I could not do, and that was to wash my stained hand in it; and yet when I had finished my "rustic toilette," I lingered there, wondering, wondering, till last night's thoughts and scenes were reproduced too vividly. For a moment even, the whole place became dark again—which was only because my eyes were dimmed by fasting sickness, no doubt; but it drove me away with a bosomful of fainting thoughts. I began to tire, body and mind, and for the first time in my life longed for the tomb-like seclusion of my room at school.

No sooner had I cleared the copse than I came face to face with the stranger again. He had remounted his horse, but seemed hardly to have moved from the place where I parted from him. And he looked so anxious, and I was so changed, that I had no hesitation now, but went to him at once.

"What am I to do with you, child?" he said.

"Take me away. I don't want to go home any more. I don't know where to go."

He said something about a "place of safety," dismounted, lifted me into the saddle, and contrived to support me there while he guided his horse, which went at the gentlest pace. My kind stranger was very thoughtful; for my part, I was sick of thought; and so we had nothing to say to each other; but at the bottom of my heart I had a deep sense of satisfaction at travelling away from a home I had never loved, and now had learned to dread. As to arguing about my "position" or my future, I made no approach to any such thing. Nor had I any definite notion "about abandoning my home for ever." It was enough that I was not to return thither now, with last night's mysteries brooding in my heart.

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But we had not gone far before it seemed probable that my runaway journey would be delayed, at the least. Once more all became dark around me. The sickness of hunger and exhaustion had returned; but though my eyes were so misty that I could not see, and my head so dizzy that I thought it must soon go round visibly, I still managed to go on unsuspected of my meditative companion. The inevitable moment came at last, though; lurching forward, I fell upon his shoulder insensible.

When next I came to my senses—

[Here let me come in with a word or two. I have nothing to say to Margaret's descriptions, except that of course they explain little of my feelings, my embarrassment. Here was I, a man who, at fourteen years or so, had been put aboard an East India ship, and abandoned in her; and who for more than twenty years afterward had passed a life which took me into all sorts of places and amongst all sorts of people; and yet never, I may say, did I find a feeling in my heart that gave me any surprise till then. It is not for me to describe it: I am not able. She has said "fascination," and I don't know any better word, if it is only writ large enough.

I was wondering a good deal, and not at all looking at the child, when she fell on my shoulder. For a moment I thought she was dead, naturally; but it soon appeared she wasn't, and so I laid her in a snug place, made my horse fast, and got on a bough to observe whether there was any cottage in sight. There was; and at no great distance. It was the same that my madame has described; and just as it appeared to her so it appeared to me. If it had been a ship I would not have trusted it, but being a cottage I had no reason to consider my own ideas about it of any account. Nor did I mean to go up to it with any particular caution; but it seems I did so, for the good people were not aware of me even when I had got the door open and stood within the threshold.

All I could see was a narrow stone passage; and for a moment the house was as quiet as if it had been abandoned. But just as I was about to call out, a woman's voice exclaimed with uncommon shrillness—

"You old fool, you must find her!"

"Don't see any must about it," answered a gruffer voice. "There'll be no particular row about her if you don't make any." I thought he said this in a bitter, sorry sort of way.

"And we're to starve!" the woman screams louder than ever.

"And we're to starve," replies the other. "If so be that we don't work, which we might try for a bit of a change."

"You work, vagabones!" the woman began again; but the man stopped her by shouting in a voice that might have knocked her down—

"Let be! let be, woman! You're grieving for your gut! I'm a grieving for the little maid!"

The conversation seemed likely to end there, and so I pretended to have just come to the door, rattling at the latch and calling. This

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brought both parties into the passage in very quick time; and when I told them I had found a young lady fainting in the wood, and wanted assistance for her, the woman began to hullaballoo about her poor child, while the man came out with me—eagerly enough.

Of course that conversation gave me certain ideas and suspicions. What they were exactly it would be hard to say now, but I felt that there was something wrong. At any rate, there was good reason for the child's unwillingness to return home; about that I made my mind up at once, and determined to look into the matter a little. By which time I began to think myself fortunate in being made an instrument of Providence, when, in fact, I was becoming a tool of the devil's. Not that I blame *him*.

This man Forster and myself carried Margaret to the house, and upstairs into her bedroom, where we laid her on her bed. The woman followed us up, proving, as she did so, that she could weep, as well as speak, shriller than most women. And then she was anxious to get rid of me with profuse thanks, telling me to go down while she brought her daughter to. But that I would not do. "Some water, ma'am!" says I. "You'll allow me the pleasure of seeing her recover." And I removed the hair from Margaret's wounded temples very deliberately, as if I meant a good deal by it. In fact, I put on a deep pretence of knowledge and suspicion, thinking that that might bring out a betrayal of the something wrong which I believed in with too much pleasure, perhaps. In pursuance of this policy I snatched the water from Mrs. Forster's hand, (which trembled I observed,) and sprinkled it myself on the child's face. She revived almost immediately, and sat up in the bed; but it was clear she did not know where she was at first.

In rising up, she opened the hand which was marked with blood, and, unnoticed by the rest, those beads fell from it upon the bed. They startled me, too, for they were stained as she describes them. I took them up, and made the woman a bow, offering them to her.

She took them in a confused, wondering sort of way, as if she did not understand what they meant; and I think she was going to say so, when a flash of horror came into her face. Again she set up her pipe. "My child, my poor child!" she cried, that being the only exclamation she could think of, it seemed.

The cry brought her child back to perfect consciousness. She answered in a sudden clear voice—"I do not believe it! I am not your child! Give them to me!" (the beads she meant.) "They are mine! They are ——" She did not finish the sentence, for the woman quickly tossed them back to her upon the bed.

Nobody now spoke. Forster turned to leave the room, looking like a guilty dog who is sorry for his fault. But I was not done yet. Now was my time. "Stay," said I, putting on my old quarter-deck style, "we must have a little conversation about this, if you please. The young lady can take care of herself now, no doubt. Oblige me by stepping downstairs."

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They obeyed, as I expected they would; and of course their obedience made me bolder.

To my mind, there's a good deal in having worn a uniform. It can always be seen on a man whatever dress he wears; and I believe these good people took me to be something official at first sight. What our conversation was, I need not tell now in details. Mrs. Forster was chief spokesman; and though she was very sharp and hard to deal with, I learned more than they wished me to know, for a certainty. It was a rambling likely-enough tale, but with lies in it clearly, and some little things that looked ugly when put together. I half believed it, and pretended that I did so completely. However, when I left them, I said I should consider the matter for a day or so; but if they stirred, or the girl disappeared either of her own will or theirs, they would immediately find themselves in the hands of the chief constable. The threat took effect as I could well see.

I may mention here that at this time I was waiting at Southampton for the arrival of my wife from the West Indies. She was a widow when I married her—older than myself by eight years; and, I do not deny, rich in money as well as in land. I had come to England a few months after the marriage to make arrangements for our settlement here; I having abandoned the sea, of which I had got heartily sick. She remained to complete the sale of her colonial property, which was all to be converted into money, and lodged in the bank till some profitable investment in England should turn up. It has been said that I was penniless at that time; but I had saved more than four thousand pounds, and her fortune, after all, was under five-and-twenty.—J. D.]

CHAPTER III.

I am Disposed of.

It was as the strange gentleman had said. After he had gone I was left not only unmolested but quite alone. All day long I sat at the window—never tired of looking at the rocking trees, which rocked my senses to rest. Now and then I heard the clatter of bucket or basin, the rustling of a besom, the twanging of the clock bell below, but that was all. Nobody talked in our house, nobody ever sang: the pleasant clatter of tongues which I sometimes heard in other cottages, even where there were only an old woman and an old hen to cluck at each other, was never known "at home." Half-a-dozen words about household matters on sitting down to meals, half-a-dozen more on rising, a sudden sharp altercation once a week or thereabouts—this was all our conversation; and to-day there was not even that. For my father left home as soon as the stranger went away, and did not return till dusk. There was no dumb creature in or about the house for my mother to speak to, had she been disposed; and she would not speak to *me*. She brought my meals up to

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my room without uttering a word. Indeed, so awful a sense of silence encompassed her that I think it would have made me hysterical at last if she had not gone out of her way to drop me a curtsey on leaving the room, every time. Now she did this with an effort of coarse mockery which she must have known would be thrown away on a child of thirteen. But what of that? She probably intended me to remember it and find out its meaning when I grew older: as I did.

I was still at my window, but seated at a little distance from it, when I saw my father returning. My mother, I suppose, must have been watching for him from another window below; for just as he came within sight he took what seemed to be a letter from his breast, held it up for a moment, and then quickly put it back. Immediately on this, my mother went to the door as if to receive him—an attention which I have since learned might have been attributable to wifely solicitude; but I had no knowledge of such a thing then, and could only explain my mother's haste to meet her husband by over curiosity about the letter.

As for me, *my* curiosity was instant and most painful. Occupied with myself so much as I was, I had no doubt the letter concerned me, and I fretted and trembled when I heard them shut themselves in to read and discuss it; the more because, though my mother went to meet her husband on the threshold, not a syllable was said then. But all in vain was my longing. Once more that evening my mother visited me, at supper-time; and then I tried hard to read the meaning of the letter in her looks. They were certainly changed. They were severe, abstracted, calculating; and instead of curtseying as she left the room, this time she paused and looked on me much as I have seen a countryman regard the pig which he doubted whether to keep or kill.

I went to bed none the happier for that cold, calculating look, but I slept. The morning was already come again when I woke—with a burning thirst. There was no water in my room, and I lay wondering a long time whether I dare go below for some before I could make up my mind to suffer. But then the thought flashed upon me—perhaps the letter had been left downstairs! This was not very probable; but with the mere notion in my head I could resist the cravings of thirst no longer.

My door was fastened on the outside by a wooden button: a homely contrivance, easily disposed of with a hair-pin. That is to say, it was easily unfastened; but this accomplished, a real difficulty stared me in the face—namely, how to fasten it again from the inside, so that my having stolen from the room might not be known. However, the deed was done now, and surely those who thirst must drink!

Very softly I went down and entered the "keeping room" or kitchen, looking, not for the water pitcher, but for something that might prove to be a letter. The table was bare. The chimney board showed nothing but its shining candlesticks and its two odious images in painted pottery. But there was a scorched fragment of paper in a corner of the fire grate, and that I snatched up eagerly.

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Only a few words appeared on my brown and shrivelled morsel of salvage, but there was something about them which, at the first glance, carried me back to school. I thought I must have seen the handwriting there. Indeed I should have been sure of it, had it not occurred to me that ladies everywhere wrote very much alike; and this was a lady's writing certainly. And what were the words? These, as I remember them, in so many parts and ends of sentences, one over the other, in this wise:—

"lled in Algeria
"his sad career has
"is my death bed
"digence,"

which last word was obviously "indigence" before its mutilation.

That was all: and as I could not perceive in these broken words any reference to myself, or the remotest connection with my parents, I concluded that I had found a mere chance fragment of waste paper, such as was commonly brought home on market days. At the same time, I was in no haste to cast it away, and was still poring over it, wondering what had become of the letter I wished so much to see, when I was startled by a rustling at the door. It was my mother.

Softly as I left my room, she (who had also been lying awake, no doubt) had heard me, while my absorption had deafened me to *her* footsteps. And there she stood.

It was the nature of this woman, who could control herself so well on ordinary occasions, to have sudden fits of cruelty cold and intense as polar frost. I plainly saw the spasm upon her face as she came toward me now with her teeth clenched, like a mechanical thing made to tear and rend. But I, who felt nothing but an unaccustomed sense of anger and disgust at sight of her, did not stir; nor did I cry out, but stood passive while she came up to me, took the hand in which I held the bit of half-burnt paper, and wrenched it till my pain and rage were so great that I dashed my disengaged hand into her face. She desisted instantly; and now, thought I, I shall be killed. But the woman only stared at me with a muddled stare, collected her senses, and then quietly ordered me upstairs. I told her I wanted water. She answered, in her coarse way, that if I did not "move" I should have more of it than was good for me. Then I thought upon the forest pool; perhaps she thought about it too. I know we both trembled for some reason.—— And all this happened in the bright and lovely stillness of a June morning, an hour after dawn.

This day, so badly begun, passed painfully—more painfully even than the day before, for then a weariness and exhaustion of body made effortless dreams of half my thoughts. But now I was refreshed, my suspicions and apprehensions were refreshed also. Besides, there was much muttered conversation below stairs at intervals; and I feared what might become of me after my daring deed if the kind stranger did not return. But he kept his word; and I cannot say how glad I was when I saw

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him riding up to the house: though he had not a cheerful look himself, I remember.

Richard Forster—that is to say, my father, you know—was not at home when the stranger arrived; but he came in soon afterwards, with a rake and some other garden tools upon his shoulder.

[I had seen him in the forest, on my way—very near the spot where I found Margaret. He had his tools with him then; and I hailed him, asking whether he was going home from work. But he did not seem to hear me, turning out of my way.—J. D.]

And then there was another long conversation between them—a time of awfulest suspense for me, poor little girl, who sat trembling in one long shiver from the first moment to the last; and yet, I dare to say, there was no man-child of my age alive with greater coolness, or patience, or resolution. If the stranger had only come up to give me a word of encouragement, then there would have been little trembling even. But he did not; contenting himself with waving his hand to me, as, from the window, I watched him alight. And a wave of the hand from a man who cannot smile may mean anything or nothing.

At length, my mother came to the foot of the stairs, and in a dry voice called me down. I was to take supper with my parents and my new friend; though, as to that, everything in the room seemed new. What change it was that had come over us all, I have no language to explain; but I felt it strongly as soon as I came into the light of the two guttering candles which had been set up (instead of one) in honour of the guest. The discussion, the arrangements of the party, had got into the air; and he was not more a stranger now than Mr. and Mrs. Forster, my parents. As for me, I felt for the first time like a lady.

My mother was the only one of us who ate much of the bread and cheese and butter which made up our supper. For her, both mind and appetite seemed to be unusually lively, and she was evidently proud of her superiority over the agitation which possessed the rest of us. My father was exceedingly restless; and whenever he glanced at me, it was with a great deal of nervousness, and a great deal of kindness, which was far harder to bear than the unblinking contemplation of his wife: who, while she munched, gazed on me as if I had become a curious and grateful object of speculation. The stranger neither looked nor spoke after his first greeting, but his presence gave me some such feeling as, I suppose, a poor wretch in the dock must have when he thinks he sees a friendly juryman.

Welcome, then, was my mother's voice, when, still munching, she began a set harangue about my obstinacy, my base't ingratitude, my wilfulness which nothing could be done with, and, more than all, my ridiculous ideas. Upon these she harped till I was ready to cry for vexation; for I began to think she might be right, and that I really was nothing but a "fanciful marm," who despised her own flesh and blood all through their trying to give her a lady's education fit for a governess. "Fit for a gover-

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ness!" That explained everything. But when I raised my shame-burning eyes to learn from my father's and the stranger's face how far they knew my naughtiness, or how much they sanctioned the terrible speech, I was comforted; for the gravity of their looks appeared rather as if it was assumed to add weight to what they did not quite believe in, and which also was being carried too far for their taste, as well as mine. A child's eyes are quick to detect such little insincerities.

However, my mother was too pleased with her task to observe any one but me, to whom it was addressed. Accordingly, she went on in a strain more and more animated, till she came to the real purpose of the harangue, which was to announce that my parents had resolved at last to be done with me; at any rate, till I learned to honour my father and mother that my days might be long in the land. Impoverish themselves any more for an ungrateful hussy, who could sit and hear all her wickedness exposed with the impudence of a highwayman's horse, they never would; and therefore it was very lucky for me that a gentleman to whom it was no use telling lies, and who would only laugh at my romantic tales, had offered to send me to another school, which was *not* in France. "As if France makes any difference to us!" she said.

"That is to say," added the stranger, "I will do so if you are still anxious to leave home. Are you?"

"Yes," I answered boldly. "I am afraid to stop here. I would run away rather!"

"There, you hear!" said my mother, demonstratively.

"Exactly what I feared," the stranger muttered. "Well, we won't let you run away, Margaret, if we can help it; that would never do. You shall have a new home, a new school, you know—if you please; and then we shall see whether you are really so wilful and wicked as your mother says you are."

"But I don't believe she is my mother!"

"Nonsense," said the stranger.

"Go to bed, ma'am," cried Mrs. Forster. I obeyed, sulkily enough, no doubt, and sorry that, in spite of my resolutions to the contrary, I had again spoken my mind.

So the matter was concluded, not happily—not to bear good fruit in season.

The stranger's horse was lodged for the night in a wood-shed which stood near the house; how he himself was accommodated I do not know. But in the morning, looking out of my window to judge of the time by "sun-up," I spied him walking moodily backward and forward under the trees at a little distance. Now I wanted to speak with him unobserved.

Waking once in the dead of the night, I overheard my parents talking, the partition which divided my room from theirs being nothing but a thin wooden veil papered. My mother's voice was indistinct; but my father's was of that rough, low, grumbling character which can be heard almost as plainly through an oaken door as at the lips of the speaker.

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All that he said was distinct enough; while as for my mother, I happen to have a gift of what may be called second hearing: others have it, too, perhaps. A brief sentence is spoken so low that not more than two or three inarticulate sounds reach me. They are unintelligible. I try, but I cannot make of them a single word; when all in a moment the whole sentence is repeated in my ears as if reverberated from some distant point in the air.

Assisted by this faculty (tested many times), I made out as much of my mother's part in the conversation as my father's, because he had not so much to say. In such scraps as these:—

She. "I can hardly get at her."

He. "So uncommon close."

She. "Saw directly by her hair she had been in the water. Drownded herself, it would have been no loss as things turn out. A'most like a providence, isn't it?"

He. "Humph. You don't like her, you know."

She. "Beggar. Take her—a good riddance."

He. "Some'at over, that's one thing!"

She. "Few pounds. No harm in him—a fool, I think!"

He. "Uncommon s'picious, *I* think. Seen me with them tools too."

She. "Spilt milk. Besides, *we* have done nothing."

He. "About them beads."

She. "That do seem strange. Can't make it out."

He. "Think he's got 'em?

She. "If he hasn't, I'll have 'em, depend on it."

He. "But if he have?"

She. "Better say nothing at all, of course."

He. "I believe you're right. Well, let us get shot of it, Betsy. Sooner the better now."

She. "Few pounds, that's some comfort. G'night."

There the conversation ended, with nought that appeared of any special significance to me, except the reference to the necklace. This revived the vivid suspicions I had conceived at the pool's brink; whereas, I myself had already begun to think of them as the offspring of the romantic fancy my mother had ridiculed. The face that had floated with mine upon the water looked into my mind again, and my beating heart kept me awake very long. Nor should I have got to sleep at all, I think, if I had not resolved to relate that evening's adventures to my stranger, and ask him about the beads.

So when I saw him pacing up and down under the trees, I made haste to dress, slipped out swiftly, softly, and then went with all the demureness of a good little girl toward the well, knowing that he must see me in passing. But although I held the beads in my hands, my purpose faltered as soon as it was begun. Somehow, my vision and my speculations were not to be spoken of—not only because grown people would be sure to think them absurd and "forward," but because they seemed to have a

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certain sacredness of their own. To tell of them, I found, was something like telling a confided secret. And then I thought of the peremptory way in which the stranger had said "Nonsense!" last night.

But there was not much time for consideration. The stranger came up, and settled my difficulties in his own way at once. "What, so early, Margaret?" he said. "Good morning to you," and took the hand which had the beads in it. Out they fell into his own: I was so confused.

"Our broken necklace, isn't it?" said he.

"Yes!" I faltered.

"The blood on them rather frightened us yesterday, and they are ugly enough at the best. Well, we must have a new necklace, I suppose." And with that he tossed my beads into the air, high over the trees, like a boy at play.

I could not repress a little cry of displeasure as they disappeared: at which he, too, looked serious, as if he feared he had forgotten himself.

"Why, they were of no value?" he said, solicitously. "You had no particular reason to set store by them?"

"Oh, no; but——"

"But what, child?"

"They were so pretty!"

"Oh, if that's all!" He smiled, strolled away toward the woodshed to look after his horse, and there was an end of another little episode. My treasures, so strangely come by, were gone irrecoverably! It is impossible to say what a painful sense of emptiness and fatal loss my foolish young heart felt at that moment; and yet, to be candid, I must confess I was all the cheerfuller for it immediately afterwards.

But once more I was to hear about my dower, at any rate. This was soon after the stranger had gone away again, promising to write to me—to me myself!—within a week.

"Margaret," said my mother, "what has become of the trumpery you made such a baby-fuss about the other morning?"

"What trumpery?"

"Them rubbishing beads!"

"I gave them to the gentleman!"

"You did! and what," she continued, her eyes kindling, "did *he* do with them?"

"Threw them away!"

"Oh," said she, looking for the truth in my face, and finding it, "very proper too."

After that Mrs. Forster seemed more comfortable, and she certainly was more harmonious.

The days passed away now very much as before, except for the distrust which made us all eyes, and the expectancy which made us like a family of perpetual listeners. Also, I was scarcely allowed to leave the house. The letter came. It told me that the writer, whose name I now first knew to be Denzil, had found a school for me in Dorsetshire;

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that if I had not changed my mind, and my parents still consented, I had only to meet him with my mother at Madame Lamont's on the following Tuesday, and the arrangement could be completed; only if I did not like Madame Lamont, or Madame Lamont's house, I was to say so at once. This letter was accompanied by another for my mother, containing some certifications of Madame's proficiency and high character.

"If I had not changed my mind!" As soon as the letter arrived I thought I had. Misgivings crept in on me. I had to recall that face, to reiterate my own fears, in order to keep my courage up. But love of change, a dread of home, and disgust at the French seminary (spite of the severe half-kindness of its English governess), prevailed; and, indeed, I soon saw from my mother's demeanour that to "change my mind" would not be tolerated.

The day arrived. We reached Madame Lamont's after the smoothest journey, and there, in my presence, the circumstances of the case were repeated. I was the little girl in whom Mr. Denzil had taken so generous an interest. Mrs. Forster was my mother, grateful for the good fortune of her child, whose education she resolved should be fit for a governess as soon as she (I) was out of long clothes. Mrs. Forster had already spent almost all her own poor savings on me already; so that the gentleman's kindness was, you might say, double. Only one thing surprised me: my mother spoke of Mr. Denzil as if she had known him for many years.

Madame, I remember, was very polite and ecstatically interested. Mr. Denzil was awkward and silent. But, on parting, he took me a little aside, put a half-sovereign into my hand, and said impressively, "Now, Margaret, be a good girl. Work at your book, don't give way to nonsense, and don't talk!"

Which was exactly how my father took leave of me. Delivering his injunctions from his seat in the cart in which he had driven us to the railway station—"Margaret," said he, "whatever you do, be a good gal. Stick to your lessons, but mind you be a good gal. And remember this, my lass—a still tongue makes a wise head."

When I was alone that evening, I put Mr. Denzil's half-sovereign together with the shilling my father gave me, and thought I would try very, very hard to do as they had bidden me. But it really seemed as if, in the opinion of all the world, I had been born for nothing but to hold my tongue!

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Domesday Book.

In the heart of London stands a vast, heavy, unfinished, Gothic edifice, with stone buttresses and mullioned windows, which has cost the country several thousands of pounds. Its official establishment of keepers, clerks, and messengers, draws from the public purse ten or twelve thousand pounds per annum. Yet, save to a few stragglers in the thickets of mediæval literature, and the working clerks of the great London law firms, it is almost unknown. Many persons who have glanced at this grim-looking structure which frowns upon Fetter Lane, may be unaware that it is the place of deposit for "The Records of the Realm," the general repository of our title-deeds, historical, legal, political, religious. It is scarcely known that on the payment of one shilling, any day in the week, between the hours of ten and four, a person may enter this office, call for the production of any single record from the eleventh century downwards, and transcribe its contents (in pencil), or obtain an official copy (in ink) at a very moderate charge. The inquisitive Britons, however, who avail themselves of this privilege are few in number: even professed historians are but just beginning to appreciate the value of the contemporary memoranda of the past which are here collected. It is a national reproach that the earliest history of England, founded upon an accurate examination of its muniments, should have been the work of a German scholar, Dr. Lappenberg. The explanation of the indifference so long felt by our literary men to the exploration of these treasures is no doubt the difficulty which they have to encounter at the outset of their undertaking. To place himself *en rapport* with the spirit of the past, the student must serve an apprenticeship to some one learned in antiquarian lore; the cerements of Norman-French and barbarous Latin must be patiently unrolled, and manifold forms of quaint, composite, and corrupt manuscript laboriously deciphered. Whoever is willing to undergo this drudgery, will reap his reward in acquiring such an intimacy with the life of the old world as can be obtained in no other way. Few professional *littérateurs* have time or patience for such labour; and most are content to remodel the materials which they have purchased at secondhand. Thus quarries of valuable historic building stone, mines of precious literary ore, lie yet unworked within this *terra incognita*.

We propose in the following pages to illustrate the importance and interest of our national records by a brief analysis of the most venerable among them all—*Domesday Book*—of the character and contents of which we believe nine-tenths of educated Englishmen are either wholly ignorant, or very imperfectly informed.

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The conquest of England by William the Norman was commenced rather than achieved by the battle of Hastings; as the repeated outbreaks of the sturdy Saxons in all parts of the kingdom, which occupied the first twenty years of his reign, necessitated constant vigilance and the frequent presence of an overawing force. In 1085, the threat of a Danish invasion, invited by the Saxon rebels, summoned him in haste from Normandy. No adequate system of defences existing in England at this time, William's simple plan of operations in the present emergency was to quarter his cavalry and infantry (Norman and Breton) on the refractory people, and to devastate the seaboard, so as to deprive the invaders of sustenance. As it happened, the alarm was needless: bribery from without, and mutiny from within, annihilated the Danish fleet before it left port. The Saxons essayed no further rebellion of importance, and William was then for the first time in reality a conqueror.

He was now in a position to "take stock" of his acquired possession; his recent experience having only given him sufficient insight into its condition to show the need of more. The working of the feudal system that he had established was clearly defective; but which were its weak points? The defensive organization of the country was no less imperfect; but where could reforms be best applied? How far had the distribution of the Norman element amid the Saxon population, which had been attempted immediately after the battle of Hastings, been actually effected? Last, but not least, what capacities existed in the country for increasing the annual revenue? No satisfactory answers to these queries could be furnished in the eleventh century by any such machinery as we now possess. The band of "enumerators," which on the 8th of April, 1861, simultaneously obtained the returns to the census from all the households in England, was probably ten times larger than the entire section of the population qualified for a similar task in 1085. Education of the most rudimentary character was then confined to the clergy and a few favoured laymen of rank, and postal communication did not exist even in embryo. No available method for obtaining the desired result can be suggested as superior to that actually employed by William. A limited number of itinerant commissioners was appointed by the king under the title of Justiciaries. Only the names of the four to whom the Midland counties were committed are now extant:—Remigius, Bishop of Lincoln; Walter Giffard, Earl of Buckingham; Henry de Ferrers; and Adam, brother of Eudo, the king's steward.

As Normans, and nominees of the Crown, the reports of these officers on the general state of the kingdom might be safely accepted as trustworthy. Their faculties and opportunities of observation, however, being inadequate to the task of estimating local peculiarities, William availed himself of the existing organization of government to supply the defect. The commissioners were empowered to summon before them the sheriff of each county, the lord of each manor, the presbyter of each church, the reeve of each hundred, the bailiff and six

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villans of every village, and examine them upon oath. The intermixture of Norman settlers with the Saxon population was probably sufficiently uniform throughout the country to justify reliance upon the average verdicts of the juries thus chosen. The queries put to them were briefly these: the name of each place; the names of its owners in the time of Edward the Confessor (the last legitimate Saxon king), and at the present time; the number of hides in the manor; the quantity of demesne land; the number and quality of the tenants; the extent of their holdings; the nature and cultivation of the soil; the number of mills, fishponds, &c.; the gross values of the manor in the time of the Confessor, at the date of the Conquest, and at the present time; and the opinion of the jury whether the value last named were capable of increase.

The work thus marked out was undertaken with such despatch that its completion was effected in about a year. Certain important omissions from the survey are, however, observable, only some of which are capable of explanation. In a few cases, lands which the king had rendered tax-free are, therefore, unsurveyed; but no invariable rule is observed in this respect: in other cases, no return of quantity was made for want of an accurate estimate existing. Some districts, London, for instance, may have been omitted on account of information respecting them already existing, or of their being under immediate observation. Durham may have been excluded because of the special privileges of jurisdiction enjoyed by its bishop palatine; but the omission of Northumberland and the greater part of Cumberland and Westmoreland, seems inadequately accounted for by the wasted condition in which William's recent inroad had left them: probably he had seen enough of them to need no further information.

The Justiciaries having concluded their reports, forwarded them to Winchester, where they were arranged into the form in which they are now preserved. The technical title of the volume thus compiled, appears from contemporary records to have been the *Description of all England*, but its popular name was then, as now, the *Domesday Book*. Of the various explanations of this term which the ingenuity of etymologists has framed, we incline to think that of Cowel the best. It is admitted on all hands that the most usual and important function of the survey was its authoritative arbitration in questions of disputed tenure and rating. The words "doom" and "day" are both Saxon equivalents of "judicium," and their union in the composition of its title thus emphasizes *Domesday Book* as the great judicial record of the age.

Two volumes—the one a folio, the other a quarto, massively bound, studded, clasped, and cased in leathern covers—form the outward integuments of the survey.* The first volume, the folio, is devoted to all the counties save those of Essex, Suffolk, and Norfolk, and contains 382 leaves of vellum, closely written on both sides in double columns; the

* A facsimile of these volumes, taken by the new process of photozincography, has been recently published by order of the Master of the Rolls.

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second volume includes the remaining counties, and contains 450 leaves, written in single column.

Sir Henry Ellis, in his able *Introduction to Domesday*—to which we have been under great obligations in writing this sketch—thus epitomizes the form of return generally followed:—"The method was first to entitle the estate to its owner, always beginning with *Terra Regis*. The hundred was next specified; then the tenant, with the place; and afterward the description of the property." At the commencement of each county, the capital borough is usually returned first. Then are recorded the names of the landholders, after which follow the detailed descriptions of their several estates. As a specimen of the ordinary form of entry, we subjoin the following, taken from the return for "Herfordscire:"—

"Terra Abbatis de Ely. In Bradewatre hund. Abbas de Ely teñ Hetfelle. p xl. hid se defd. T'ra ē xxx. car. In dnio xx. hidæ ⁊ ibi sunt ii. car ⁊ iii. adhuc poss fieri. Ibi p̄br cū xviii. villis ⁊ xviii. bord hnt xx. car ⁊ adhuc v. car poss fieri. Ibi xii. cot ⁊ vi. servi ⁊ iiii. mol de xlvii. sol ⁊ iiii^or deñ. Pstū x. car. Pastura ad pec. Silva ii^o mil porc ⁊ de 9suetud silvæ ⁊ pastæ x. sol. In totis valent val ⁊ valuit xxv. lib. T.R.E. xxx. lib. Hoc ꝝ jacuit ⁊ jacet in dnio æcclæ de Ely."

This, being literally interpreted, reads thus:—

"The Land of the Abbot of Ely. In Bradewatre [Broadwater] Hundred. The Abbot of Ely holds Hetfelle [Hatfield]. It is taxed for 40 hides. The land [arable] is 30 carucates. In demesne 20 hides, and there are 2 ploughs, and 3 more can be made [employed]. There is a priest with 18 villans, and 18 bordars, who have 20 ploughs, and 5 ploughs more can be made. There are 12 cottars, and 6 serfs, and 4 mills worth 47*s*. 4*d*. Meadow, 10 carucates. Pasture for cattle. Wood for 2,000 pigs, and of the customs of wood and pasture 10*s*. In all its profits it is and was worth 25*l*. In the time of King Edward, 30*l*. This Manor did and doth lie among the demesnes of the church of Ely."

It is difficult to conceive a return more concise, and at the same time more comprehensive, than the foregoing. The terse style and abbreviated form are strikingly illustrative of the practical bent of the Norman writers, as also of the period when learning was the monopoly of a caste, systematically and jealously exclusive.

Before considering in detail the condition of England in the eleventh century, as disclosed in this minute record, it may be well to present the reader with a brief picture of its general aspect. We look on a scene as little resembling the "merrie England" of the sixteenth century, or the busy England of the nineteenth, as it is possible to imagine. Forests and parks of many thousand acres in extent, chiefly composed of oak and beech trees, in whose branches the hawk was encouraged to build, and upon whose dropped acorns and mast innumerable herds of swine were daily driven to feed, covered vast districts, occupied three centuries later by thriving towns, and now by densely crowded cities. The

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Eastern counties from Lincoln to Sussex consisted, to a considerable extent, of dreary swamps, overflowed during several months of the year; undrained, except, perhaps, in the neighbourhood of a monastic house; and generally profitless, save for their rank pasture, eels, and wild fowl. Animals now extinct, or rarely to be met with in this island, were then common—such as the wolf, the marten, and the polecat. Where tides of human labour now surge in the centre of the metropolis were tranquil green fields and woodlands. The city of Westminster was then the Isle of Thorney, formed by an arm of the Thames; its abbey and church standing nearly alone, with a wood in the rear which afforded shelter and food for "a thousand swine." No public or private buildings of considerable size adorned the streets of the largest towns, or any rural district; with the exception of a few royal and baronial castles, and a somewhat larger number of monastic houses, cathedrals, and churches. A few simple architectural features, impossible to be mistaken, were apparent throughout these edifices: the mount and keep of a ruined castle, the round-headed arch and chevron ornament of a cathedral or church porch, are memoranda of the period still spared to us. The seats of our country gentlemen were then four-roomed houses, with external staircases, and usually destitute of chimneys or glazed windows; the cottages of the labourers were mud hovels.

The difficulty of recognizing our native soil in the England of Domesday is increased when we turn to its inhabitants. We find them separable into three (if not more) races, akin in blood, but diverse in character. This diversity was most strongly marked in the dominant race. If, in spite of his endeavours to disguise himself by a free use of the razor, the Norman's fair hair and blue eyes still betrayed his brotherhood to the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Dane, his active temperament, love of dainty apparel, elegant banquets and romantic minstrelsy, at least offered a complete contrast to their indolent, sensual, and barbaric grossness. In the quality of brute courage, indeed, the Norman might be no match for his opponents; but, untempered by discipline and uninspired by enterprise, they could only doggedly resist, and when that was in vain, doggedly submit. The contemptuous unconcern with which the Conqueror possessed himself of the fairest manors in the realm, and monopolized the best offices in Church and State for his followers, is consonant with this diversity. There were no elements in the Saxon thane capable of being developed into the Norman baron; he could only be removed or degraded. The Conqueror's superior wisdom is at the same time apparent in the respect which he showed for all that was admirable in the Saxon polity and legislation; which, especially when hallowed by the sanction of the Confessor's authority, was amalgamated with the Norman system. No violent disruption of popular habits was attempted; for though Norman-French was the language of the Court, Saxon was employed by the Conqueror himself in many of his charters, and Latinized Saxon words expressing local technicalities perpetually occur in *Domesday Book*.

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Not less antagonistic must have been the ordinary avocations of the dominant and the conquered races. Even in times of peace the Norman baron, as a ruler with a precarious tenure of power, had need to go armed, in readiness at any moment for the field; the routine of military exercises with his squires and men-at-arms was doubtless, therefore, his regular business; as the occasional supervision of the Saxon villans who tilled his demesne-lands, or the adjudication of disputes at his manorial court, occupied his leisure. The Saxon thane, when suffered to dwell unmolested on his diminished patrimony, felt himself an alien in his own land; though subject to the same feudal requirements as the Normans, he would take no interest in the task of preparation for a campaign which might be fratricidal, and could scarcely prove beneficial to himself; agricultural pursuits were, therefore, his sole resource. The Norman freeholder, when not the minister of a baron, aped his dignity on a smaller scale; while the Saxon householder, if not content to till the soil as the vassal of a foreign lord, must needs turn his energies to trade: as the burgess of a town, he had some hopes of passing a quiet existence, safe from the persecution of his rulers, if not from their contempt and greed. The Normans were not "a nation of shopkeepers;" but, though despising the indignity, well appreciated the profit of the counter and till. Most of the Saxon customs enjoyed by the existing cities and boroughs were confirmed by William, on the payment of a round composition.

The paucity and simplicity of the trades then followed are not a sufficiently accurate indication of the extent to which civilization had advanced. The women of each household were its ordinary manufacturers, and in most cases superseded the necessity of employing the baker, the brewer, the weaver, or the tailor, for the supply of daily wants. The smith, the tanner, and the carpenter were no doubt to be found in every town, and the larger and wealthier populations of London, York, and Winchester probably developed a fuller list of demands which met with an adequate supply. The independent "manufacturing interest" of England, so far as we have been able to discover from *Domesday*, was represented by the clothworkers and the potters; two incidental notices of whom occur. Certain individuals are also mentioned as skilled in special branches of artistic industry, such as goldsmiths and embroiderers. It is probable that the monastic houses contained a large number of frocked and tonsured artisans, who, as amateurs, passed unrecorded, but whose labours met with extensive patronage from the nobility.

If to this summary of the social characteristics of the country we add that its political condition presented the aspect of a despotism, wherein the sovereign was but the general of an army, on the obedience of whose officers he had only the hold of personal influence; and that its religious condition consisted in the performance of an elaborate system of ceremonial rituals, whereby a dominant clergy controlled an illiterate laity —we shall exhaust the broader features of dissimilarity between the England of 1085 and the England of 1863. The details, however, of the

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national status afforded in the transcript of *Domesday* deserve a close inspection, as they demonstrate the real nature of the change effected by the Norman conquest. The rough impression that we have already obtained has shown us the antagonism of race, and a minuter observation will show the factitious amalgamation which it was the Conqueror's great work to accomplish by the agency of feudalism.

The conditions of social rank enumerated in the survey are very numerous: a distinct gradation is observable at the commencement of the scale, but it cannot be detected throughout. The dignitaries of the Church, bishops and abbots, occupy the first place, in virtue of their office; the Norman barons rank next, as the immediate freeholders or tenants-in-chief of the king; and the thanes, or Saxon barons, follow. Of these last there were, probably, three orders in Saxon times, and two under the Norman régime, viz. barons and vavasors. Sir Walter Scott's Cedric, in *Ivanhoe*, is a type of the baronial thane. The vavasors seem seldom to have been recognized under that denomination: they were freeholders inferior to the barons; probably not tenants of the king in chief, but of a mesne lord, and they subsequently merged into the general body of freeholders. Thus, Chaucer, in the fourteenth century, refers to the title as synonymous with "franklin," or country gentleman:—"Was no wher swiche a worthy vavasour." Next ranked the *aloarii*, or tenants of allodial land, *i. e.* of a free hereditary estate, which, though subject to certain feudal charges, the owner had power to dispose of by gift or sale. These estates, both from the names of the tenants and from their locality, seem to have been held exclusively by Saxons. As "allodium" was generally descendible to all the sons of a deceased tenant, it is probable that the gavelkind lands of Kent are remnants of this species of property.

The ranks of "milites" and "liberi homines" are vaguely recognizable, inasmuch as both terms are used in *Domesday* to signify diverse classes of persons: the one, in the words of Sir H. Ellis, "sometimes implying a soldier or mere military servant, and sometimes a person of higher distinction;" the other "signifying not merely the freemen or freeholders of a manor, but occasionally including all persons holding in military tenure." Speaking generally, "miles" in the survey stands for a knight, whether of the king or of a mesne lord; "liber homo," in like manner, signifies freeholder, whether of the king in chief or of a mesne lord. The context of the passage in any given instance must decide the precise meaning. The socmen, who came next in order, were inferior landholders within the "soc" or liberty of a superior lord: though not absolutely freemen, their services to the lord were certain, and they could not be ousted from their tenements at his pleasure. The word "soc" is still preserved in socage, the tenure upon which all lands in England are now holden. The radmen, or radchenistres, whose names occasionally occur, were probably socmen who were bound to serve the lord on horseback, if required.

We now come to the manifold and perplexed diversities of servile

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tenure, or villenage. The villan (whose name is derivable either from *vilis*, the character of his condition, or *villa*, the place of his abode) was either "*regardant*," that is, annexed to the land, or "in gross," that is, attached to the person of the lord. In the one case, he could be sold only as a chattel of the manor; in the other, he could be transferred from one lord to another. But within these two leading divisions there were numerous varieties. The "*coliberti*," or "bures," seem to have been a privileged body of villans, approximating to freemen in the nature of their services, but differing from them in respect that such services were the arbitrary stipulations of the lord. The "*bordarii*" were cottagers (from the Saxon *bord*, a cottage), who in return for a permissive enjoyment of their tenements, rendered various menial services to the lord. The "coscets," "*cottarii*," and "*cotmanni*," were all likewise cottagers, who paid rent and did service for their tenements, but "the shade of difference" between them, according to Sir H. Ellis, "is undiscoverable." Low as each of these grades may appear, there was one yet lower; the class of "*servi*," or absolute bondmen: the women of this grade are styled, in the survey, "ancillæ." Herein were probably included what we should call farm-labourers, shepherds, ploughmen, dairy-maids, and the like. The distinction between the villan and the serf seems to have been one of degree only: the tenure of both was servile; but whereas the former, whether *regardant*, or in gross, was always connected with the possession of a tenement which he could call a home, the latter had no such privilege, and was wholly dependent for his abode and subsistence upon the lord's pleasure. A similar distinction prevailed under the Saxon government.

The feudal system recognized three descriptions of tenure, each characterized by peculiar services. The most independent was that of free-alms, under which most of the religious houses held their lands. This tenure exempted them from all services but prayer for the souls of the founder and his family, and from the greater part of the secular burdens of the State. Tenure by knight-service was the fundamental element of the feudal system, and at the time of *Domesday* was the most prevalent. Whether existing as a bond between the king and his tenants-in-chief, or between them and their vassals, it consisted in the proffer of military aid for a definite period, in proportion to the extent of the holding, during time of war; and its honourable quality was held to arise both from the character and the uncertainty of the service recorded. Homage to the superior lord, which comprehended an oath of perpetual fealty, and periodic attendance or "suit" at his court, were the formal recognitions of this tenure demanded of the tenant. Aids of money, on the special occasions of the lord's being taken prisoner, of his eldest son's attaining the rank of knighthood, and his eldest daughter's marriage; the wardship and matrimonial disposal of the heir when a minor; a "relief" or fine payable by the heir of full age at his father's death; "*primer seizin*," or the first year's profit of the lands (in the case of a tenant-in-chief), and a fine for licence to alienate the estate, were the substantial recognitions of this

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tenure. The tenures which the feudists term "grand and petit serjeanty" were of the same honourable nature as knight-service, differing, however, in the special characteristic that their services were rendered to the king's person: such as carrying his spear, holding his stirrup, presenting him with a sword every year, &c. Tenure by socage is the generic title opposed by the feudists to tenure by knight-service, as marked by all those services, whether free or base, which were definite and not precarious: the payment of rent in money, or in kind, is the most ordinary instance. The tenant in free socage was subject to somewhat fewer feudal burdens than were imposed on the military tenant; but this advantage was counterbalanced by the perpetuity of his service, which remained unaffected by the fluctuations of peace and war. Tenancy in villan-socage comprehended the numerous classes already described as differing from each other only in degrees of servitude.

The artificial composition of the political structure thus outlined is worth attention. None of the constitutions which the Abbé Siéyès kept in the pigeon-holes of his bureau could have been more curiously elaborate than this English feudalism: if its machinery be contemplated at one view, it seems incredible that it can ever have worked. Class does not appear linked to class by any of the social laws now known; and might is here the highest right, restrained only so far as is necessary for the preservation of order. Justice, though in theory the substantial basis of legislation, is in practice the flimsy superstructure; the king being the paramount lord of the soil, the sole lawgiver, the arbiter of war and peace, the dispenser of life and death, of liberty and slavery. His great barons, though originally his fellows, are theoretically his servants, and bound to many substantial proofs of allegiance: they cannot sell their lands, or marry, or leave the country, without paying largely for his licence; and personal and pecuniary aids on various pretexts are continually demanded of them. The class below the baronial is dependent on it in a similar manner, and in addition is subject to certain exactions of the Crown. These restraints increase, and their alleviations for the most part diminish in regular proportion as we descend the scale. The members of the lowest rank are all but devoid of individual rights; being only distinguishable from the cattle they tend in that their lives and limbs are nominally under the protection of the law.

After making every allowance for the brutalizing influence that a condition of servitude, systematic and hereditary, must exert upon the human organization, it is still marvellous that the forefathers of modern Englishmen should have endured for a year, much more for centuries, a despotism so absolute. It would be inexplicable, were there not reason to think both that the system was considerably modified in practice, and that, even when modified, it did not pass current without continual opposition from the suffering classes. In illustration of such modification may be noticed the instances of legal emancipation from serfdom referred to in the survey and elsewhere. The growth of

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the burgher class, consequent on the general progress of civilization, tended further to mitigate the severity of feudalism, by diverting industry into new channels. As regards the revolutionary element in English history, it is sufficient to say that its annals deserve a completer elucidation than they have yet received; and the result of further inquiries would, we think, establish the constitutional character of many popular risings that have hitherto been classed among anarchical outbreaks.

The territorial divisions of the country have not materially altered since the era of *Domesday:* the shires now bear the same names, and are nearly of the same extent as then; ridings, wapentakes, hundreds, and rapes, are still recognized, though their original significance is forgotten. The riding is properly treding, or trithing, the third part of a county. The wapentake has its name from weapon-touching, the ordinary mode of voting at the Saxon public assemblies. The hundred is variously explained to mean the extent of a hundred hides of land, a hundred villages, or a hundred persons. Rape signifies a district, probably of military jurisdiction. The Last, a term confined in the survey to Kent, is still preserved in the Lath-Court regularly held for the government of Romney Marsh.

Of the cities and boroughs returned in *Domesday*, about forty are surveyed with great minuteness: these are the cases, already mentioned, where peculiar privileges existed which had been confirmed to the citizens by William. Some of the customs are curious, but want of space forbids our specifying them. Most, if not all, the boroughs were market towns; though the franchise of a market was often appurtenant to a rural manor by special charter. Few towns appear to have been walled at this period, and still fewer moated. The ravages of war had been severely felt; York, Derby, Winchester, and other places, being reduced to little more than half their former size. As many as fifty castles are enumerated in various parts of the kingdom, about half the number having been recently erected.

The characteristic features of the manor (which was the typical form of territorial division under the feudal system) were the demesnes, cultivated by the lord's bondmen for his benefit, and the lands apportioned by him to his free tenants. The term "vill" is sometimes applied in *Domesday* to a manor or lordship, in a kindred sense to which we retain it. A hamlet or member of a manor was often called a "berwick" (literally, corn-farm); to this probably answered the grange of a monastic house, the name of which is still attached to old buildings in some parts of the country. The lord's chief residence or mansion-house is termed in *Domesday* his "hall" or "court," both familiar titles to us. It was usual for him to entrust the management of his estate to a bailiff or reeve: this functionary collected and distrained for his master's rents, kept the peace, prevented trespasses within the manor, and presided on occasion at the manorial court; his underling was styled "bedel," a name under various spellings still extant. The average extent of civil

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and criminal jurisdiction enjoyed by a feudal lord was embraced in the four franchises known by the Saxon terms of "sac," "soc," "theam," and "infangthefe." The first was the power of hearing and determining disputes among the tenants; the second was the precinct within which such power was exercised; the third was the right of possessing and governing hereditary villans and their progeny; and the fourth was the privilege of seizing and judging any thief within the fee: the franchise of a gallows was generally appurtenant to the last-named privilege.

Passing to the physical characteristics of England, as disclosed in the returns of the several manors, we find five denominations of land—"*Terra*," uniformly applied to arable land; "*silva*," or "*nemus*," woodland; "*pastura*," cattle pasture; "*pratum*," meadow land for hay; "*mariscus*," marsh land. The arable land in each return takes the prominence due to its value. Its extent is generally given in hides and carucates, measures of uncertain amount, but both having reference to the quantity which one plough was sufficient to cultivate; the actual number of ploughs is then returned, and, where this is unequal to the capability of the soil, an estimate of the deficit is generally added. Oxen were the ordinary, if not the only, animals employed in ploughing, and wheat seems to have been the grain chiefly grown. Woodland is an item of much importance in *Domesday*, less for its value in respect of timber, than for its yield of acorns and mast, termed pannage, upon which the countless herds of swine then kept in England wholly subsisted: payments by tenants for licence to depasture swine in the lord's wood formed a considerable share of his revenue. Wood, however, as available for building and other purposes, is often enumerated in the survey; the oak, the beech, the elm, the ash, the alder, and the willow being particularly mentioned. Under the term "assart" is designated woodland "grubbed up" for the purpose of cultivation.

The repeated mention of pasture in the survey attests the immemorial reputation of England as the paradise of graziers; the Southdowns, dear to mutton-lovers, are not without a record here. "At Sunburne, in Hampshire, the king's bailiff claimed for the manor a virgate of land, *et pascuam quam vocant Dunam*."—(Ellis, p. xxxii.) Meadow, where named without qualification, must be taken to mean hay-fields; where associated with oxen, the quantity of pasture set apart for their use is intended. Marsh land occurs chiefly in the returns from the Eastern counties; and the rents seem to have been paid in eels, as the main source of profit.

Only seven forests are enumerated in Domesday, though it is probable that the whole number then existing was very large: the omission of so many was, no doubt, due to the difficulty of assessing their value, which arose not from timber, or pannage, but "vert and venison." The New Forest, as the Conqueror's recent creation, is returned in fullest detail; and the reference made to several ancient manors within its precincts, corroborates the testimony of contemporary chroniclers to William's unscru-

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pulous seizure of his subjects' property. Though forests were held to belong to the crown, parks, with the liberty of sporting therein, were frequently enjoyed by the greater barons, among whose retainers huntsmen are commonly enumerated. In the Western Counties, "*haiæ*," or haws, are sometimes mentioned; these were hedged enclosures used for the capture of game. Domesday describes vineyards of considerable extent in various counties, some of which seem to have been highly productive. A large monastery was rarely without a vineyard on its demesne: a fact which fairly leads to the inference that wine of English growth was by no means of despicable quality.

The mill, which now forms such a leading feature in our landscapes, was scarcely less familiar to an observer in the eleventh century: it was invariably appurtenant to a manor, the tenants being forbidden to grind their corn out of the precincts. The produce of a manorial mill was often large, being derived both from the payments in money or grain made by the tenants, and from the fishery of the mill-stream; water was the only motive power then employed. The earliest mention of a wind-mill in this island is said to be of the date of Richard the First, a century after *Domesday*.

Next to the mill, the fishery was the most important item of produce in a manor. The herring-fisheries of the Eastern counties were as famous then as now; and the monks of Christ Church, Canterbury, found their herring-fishery of Sandwich a very comfortable source of sustenance for the inner man upon fast days: its annual yield to the refectory was not less than 40,000. The ecclesiastics of St. Peter's, Winchester, obtained nearly the same number from their manor of Lewes, Sussex; and the villans of the little village of "Bristelmestune," which it is hard to recognize in the modern Brighton, paid a yearly rent of 4,000 to their lord. Salmon, lampreys, and eels, were also fish largely in repute at this time; the Severn and the Wye being then, as now, famed for the former. Private fish-ponds, called "vivaries," were usually formed in the demesnes of religious houses.

Of the mineral products of the country, iron and lead are returned in *Domesday;* the former in several counties, the latter in Derbyshire only. Sir H. Ellis explains the silence of the survey touching the tin-mines of Cornwall (which were in full work before the Roman conquest), by the fact that the county was laid waste by the Danes in 997, and again by the sons of Harold in 1068. A century after *Domesday* we find the mines once more profitable. Salt works are frequently returned: those on the sea-coast were no doubt pans for the evaporation of sea-water; those inland, refineries of salt-springs. "At the time of forming the survey, rock or fossil salt was not known in England. The first pits of it were accidentally discovered in Cheshire—on the very spot where *Domesday* mentions brine-springs—as late as the year 1670."

Touching the ecclesiastical condition of England, *Domesday* is a less valuable exponent than we have in other respects found it. Reference is

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only made to about 1,700 churches, although the existence of a much larger number is certain from contemporary evidence: but it formed no part of the duty of the commissioners to make inquiries on this subject. From incidental allusions, we are able to learn that the church of the eleventh century was usually a manorial appurtenance, founded in many cases by the lord, and endowed at his pleasure with tithes. More than a century elapsed before Pope Innocent III. decreed the absolute consecration of parochial tithes to the parish churches of England. The humble position of the secular clergy at the date of the survey is shown by the frequent enumeration of priests among the villans of a manor. That the priesthood belonged to the lowest ranks of society at least as late as the fourteenth century, is indeed certain: thus Chaucer correctly represents the "personne of a toun" and the "plowman" as brothers.

The illustration of contemporary manners furnished in *Domesday*, though scanty, is not without interest. In several leading features we find the rudimentary Englishman of the eleventh century resembling his developed descendant of the nineteenth. Gifted with firm will, warm passions, and strong muscles, which, owing to a profound ignorance of natural laws, he was unable to direct aright, no wonder that he often erred into violent and profligate excesses. Yet the sentiments of justice and order, of devotion and charity, if too weak to leaven, were powerful enough to tinge his political system and daily habit of life. Thus, for example, the custom of trying by ordeal a prisoner accused of crime was founded upon an honest though superstitious persuasion that God would thereby declare the right. The sanctity of marriage is recognized in several passages of the survey; and allusion is once made to the forfeiture of an estate, incurred by a widow who married within a year after her husband's death. The perpetual references to grants of land made to the Church in free alms, attest the devotion of the laity quite as strongly as the rapacity of the clergy; and the practice of ratifying the seisin of land by presenting a gift to the altar, is an instance of the infusion of a religious element into secular business. Finally, the Englishman of 1085 proclaimed his paternity to us by evincing the same love of field-sports and good-fellowship which it is our boast to cherish. Hunting and hawking were then the recreations of the upper classes, the Church and the nobility. A brachet (the ordinary term for a hound) was held so valuable as to be intrusted to the special custody of a tenant who enjoyed his land by the service of rearing its litters. Aeries of hawks are mentioned in various places, and a hawk is sometimes estimated at not less than 10*l.*, a sum equal to nearly 200*l.* of our present money. With horse, hound, and hawk, our forefathers took such vigorous exercise as well entitled them to the good cheer of beef, mutton, and pork, bread, butter, and cheese, wine, ale, and mead, that we find them enjoying. We cannot more fitly conclude this epitome of *Domesday Book* than by a reference to the kindly custom then prevalent, and not yet obsolete, of drinking the "*poculum charitatis*" at the close of a banquet.

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Unctuous Memories.

I MUST not be understood as habitually indifferent to the eatables and drinkables which, with periodical punctuality, appeal to my appetite: far from it! Those intensely ethereal natures who epxress indifference to flavours, are no friends of mine. They receive no homage at my hands. As Charles Lamb wittily says: "*I am no Quaker at my food.* I confess I am not indifferent to the kinds of it. Those unctuous morsels of deer's flesh were not made to be received with dispassionate services. I hate a man who swallows it affecting not to know what he is eating. *I suspect his taste in higher matters.*"

Let us, therefore, understand each other. I enjoy my food, and am not to be caught blushing at the avowal; a good dinner, a good luncheon, nay, when moved to a reckless disregard of the morrow by stimulated social sensibilities, even a good *supper* holds out charms which I pretend not to resist. But it is nevertheless a fact—which Philosophy may explain if she can, and if she can't, may pronounce to be a first truth—that with this ready disposition towards enjoyment, and with what, superficially viewed, may seem ample means for gratifying it, there are few meals which are thoroughly enjoyed *as* meals. I do not speak of humdrum occasions, dinners which appear with a mild recurrent mediocrity, enough to satisfy the periodical cravings, but without any appeals to higher enthusiasm. I speak of meals ostentatiously above the line; set occasions; premeditated efforts. These, when successful—and they are not always saved from failure—draw their success from accessory and quite extraneous sources. The meal has become a banquet. The pleasure is drawn from the geniality of the guests, or the splendours of the table, not from the unadulterated relish of food as food. It is this gusto of the meal as a solitary and isolated pleasure, equally apart from the mere vulgar vigour of appetite, and the visionary glamour of geniality or splendour, which I find to be so rare.

In travelling backwards along the confused tracks of memory, my mind pauses at certain places, and at each pause a sense of remembered enjoyment steals deliciously over me. Certain festal occasions are singled out when meals were emphatically "enjoyed:" but they are few. They were not festal in the ordinary sense; for, as just hinted, the simplicity of the meal as a meal must not be perplexed by extraneous enjoyments. Although I have dined with many people, and in many lands; with very considerable persons, and with persons of no consideration; with gourmets, and with lavish entertainers; not one of these dinners is recalled as a meal. It is not at the Café de Paris, nor at Greenwich, that memory lingers lovingly.

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Compared with the most magnificent "spread" which it has been my lot to assist at, there is a dinner I recall in the Ratcliffe Highway, which is as venison unto veal, as Beethoven to Balfe.

That dinner was eaten at an oyster-stall. It was simply composed, but *simplex munditiis!* The *carte du jour* ran thus: One penny loaf (a "penny buster" used to be the name, perhaps is so still), and one pennyworth of oysters, namely, five, with vinegar and pepper *à discrétion*. And for wine—there was youth, health, high hopes, and careless content; and these give water a flavour not to be drawn from any other bin.

Do not too hastily rush to the conclusion that this dinner remains in my memory because of its piquant contrast with the luxury of daily feasts. Such contrast as there was rose solely out of the oysters. My ordinary dinner was a penny loaf. The molluscs were a debauch. In those pinched yet happy days, when I was a clerk in the city, my dinner allowance was one shilling daily; and this shilling a fond mother blindly believed was invested thus:—

	d.
A plate of hot meat	6
Potatoes	1
Pudding, or tart	3
Bread	1
Waiter	1

And in the early days of my commercial education this *was* the regular investment; but in progress of time my investments became less and less systematic, and the eating-house keepers found one source of their ill-gotten wealth seriously threatened by the development of a new appetite—that of knowledge. Although I had the hunger of youth, and decidedly belonged to the carnivora, there were sirens at the second-hand bookstalls whose voices were not to be withstood. My dinners dwindled to a penny loaf, with an occasional relish in the shape of a sausage. It was remarked in those days that my tea and supper displayed a vigour of appetite only to be expected from a "growing youth." Luckily for me I had not money allowed me for those meals.

How vividly that oyster-stall in Ratcliffe Highway rises on the horizon! It is not a picturesque spot; by no means æsthetical in its suggestions, yet how it is painted upon memory! There on the left hand is the tub with oysters, and the deal board on which range vinegar cruet and pepper-box. With the supreme grace of accomplished ease the red-nosed merchant offers me the succulent molluscs—none of your pigmy "natives," so contemptible as to offer no surface for a juicy bite—but large and liberal animals, apparently of the kind described by the American as requiring two men to swallow one whole; these honest mouthfuls I liberally drench with vinegar, powder deftly with pepper, and swallow with quick palpitating gusto, which diffuses a sensuous delight through the whole frame, making the very boots of hobbledehoyhood thrill with the sensation! This was unadulterated flavour. It was unperplexed by obtrusive splendours of glass and silver, by the attentions of other

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people's flunkies, or dismal clergymen from Gunter's. It was a dinner *al fresco*. It had the eminent advantage of cheapness, was not too abundant in quantity, and was intensified by the keenness of youthful appetite. What French cook will ever give me such a sensation as that?

Another glorious occasion I remember. The early grey of dawn was glimmering over the Southampton streets. We had just arrived from Jersey in the sailing packet (those were the days of sailing packets, which cannot now be contemplated without a shudder), and while our seniors were looking after the baggage, or had gone to bed in the hotel, my brother and I walked briskly up the old familiar High Street. Suddenly we came upon a stall, whence arose the steam of Early Purl, or Salop, flattering our senses. Ye Gods! what a breakfast! In vain a cautious scepticism suggests that the liquid was one which my palate would *now* shudderingly reject; perhaps so; I did not reject it *then*; and in memory the flavour is beatified. I feel its diffusive warmth stealing through me. I taste its unaccustomed and exquisite flavour. Tea is great, coffee greater; chocolate, properly made, is for epicures; but these are thin and characterless compared with the salop swallowed in 1826. That *was* nectar, and the Hebe who poured it out was *not* a blear-eyed old woman, though to vulgar vision she may have presented some such aspect.

Vastly as this breakfast was enjoyed, I have never renewed my acquaintance with Early Purl, or Salop, whichever it was (if the two are not indeed one), and I only assume that it was one of these liquids from what I have subsequently learned. Charles Lamb, for example, in his essay on chimney-sweepers tells us, "There is a composition, the groundwork of which I have understood to be the sweet wood yclept sassafras. This wood boiled down to a kind of tea, and tempered with an infusion of milk and sugar, hath to some tastes a delicacy beyond the China luxury. I know not how thy palate may relish it, I have never ventured to dip my own particular lip in a basin, a cautious premonition to the olfactories constantly whispering to me, that my stomach must infallibly, with all due courtesy, decline it. Yet I have seen palates otherwise not uninstructed in dietetical elegancies, sup it up with avidity. This is salop—the precocious herbwoman's darling—the delight of the early gardener who transports his smoking cabbages from Hammersmith to Covent Garden's famed piazzas—the delight, and oh! I fear too often the envy of the unpennied sweep." No herbwoman, no sweep, ever relished the fragrant liquid as I did on that memorable day. Why?

One more boyish reminiscence shall suffice for my present theme. It is of a breakfast at an early coffee-shop somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Lunatic Asylum. My geography is excusably vague, for I do not know at whose house I had been dancing all night. It was one of my first balls. I was taken there by a friend, who had procured invitations for my brother and myself—to our great delight when the invitations came, but to my torture when I learned, as quickly I did learn, that I was to present myself in—a jacket! My mother, unmoved by the solemnity

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of the occasion, pitilessly refused to order a tail-coat for me, on the irrational pretext that I was not yet out of jackets. In vain I remonstrated, stormed, and pleaded; that hideous, but much-coveted, garment was denied me. My wrath flamed up into a threat of *not* going to the ball; but as that threat seemed to create no serious alarm, it was quietly withdrawn. The expected day arrived; and with the bitterness of envy I saw my brother arrayed in the enviable splendour of a swallowtail, and was forced to content myself with a jacket which had no approach to manliness. It was with dreadful misgivings as to "what the girls would think of me" that I entered the ball-room; but quickly discovering that the girls did not trouble themselves at all about the matter, I gave myself up to the pleasures of the evening. It is a cruel thing to be a boy, unless you are among boys. Girls are so pitilessly indifferent to your aspirations; and men (very wisely) get out of your way. Yet in spite of my disadvantages I had a fair share of partners that night—some girls were conquered by the resolute audacity with which I invited them; others because they preferred standing up with a boy to not dancing at all; and some few because they felt a gentle, half-maternal pleasure in patronizing a boy. The jacket troubles were forgotten; and even they would have been endurable for the sake of the supper I ate. You may imagine how lobster salad and open tart filled up the pauses of chicken and trifle, how tipsy-cake and white soup mingled with blancmange and strawberries in one ravenous pell-mell; but although I have a dim idea of an enormous supper, I have no vivid remembrance of any flavour. *That* was to come. After supper, the dancing became fast and furious. The curtains were withdrawn, and admitted the early sunbeams to light up with somewhat ghastly effect the worn and jaded cheeks of the mothers, and the fast-fading splendour of the daughters. On quitting this gay and festive scene, this hall of dazzling light, we set out to walk home, a distance of some six miles. Soon after we passed the Lunatic Asylum, we espied a coffee-shop. The proposition to breakfast there was joyously agreed to; and in a few minutes a rasher of bacon and a cup of coffee smoked before us, the flavour of which haunts me to this day. Why is it that no bacon has since had that aroma, and that penetrating flavour? Or was the effect purely subjective? And if subjective, did it depend on the contrast between the breakfast and its scene, with the supper and *its* scene, or on our riotous animal spirits which not even six hours' dancing could damp? or was there some subtle physiological preparation of conditions, making the palate unusually sensitive? These be questions.

An inconsiderate reader will answer that the whole mystery lies in youth and appetite; and in this answer the reader displays his imperfect induction; for why are not all, or many of the meals eaten during a vigorous youth equally memorable? Besides, as my record advances he will see that some memorable occasions appear when youth had long departed, and when appetite was feeble. Notably is this the case with a leg of mutton at Dover. I had been long absent from England, and had

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consequently almost lost the sense of mutton, having cheated appetite with *Rindfleisch* and *Kalbsbraten* (if these were not old slippers and book-covers, mysteriously *accommodés*) until mutton became a myth. The Calais steamer had just flung me ashore; in a state of concentrated misanthropy, and a general sense of the worthlessness of existence, I walked into the coffee-room of the *Lord Warden*, where a leg of South-down was quickly set before me. O wondrous herbivore, what flesh is thine! Great Lyric of the downs! What a sensation was that of the first mouthful—as of a man passing into beatification! Mutton? It was ambrosia! It was on this food that Olympus feasted; and no wonder that the gods were joyous and carelessly immortal. Fugitive flavours, stirring the senses into the higher raptures of music, why are ye so rare?

Now if the reader will only picture to himself the intense prosaicalness of the scene and its accessories, he will perceive that while, on the one hand, there was neither youth nor appetite, on the other there was neither poetry nor splendour to reflect their influence on this dinner. The sea had been turbulent, and my stomach had been anything but quiet; I was green, headachy, morose. The scene had the liveliness usually noticed in the coffee-rooms of English hotels: silent English parties scattered about it, dining grimly, and speaking in whispers; English waiters, so oppressive to the finer sensibilities; and, as a background, the lingering remembrance of that horrible steamer, quivering, shivering, groaning, moaning, and pitching. This surely was no scene for enjoyment.

It is otherwise with a dinner I remember on the borders of a lake in the Tyrol. We are three joyous travellers: a Frenchman, a Hungarian, and myself. We have been for some days rambling amid scenes of sequestered loveliness, and have on this day been walking up to that point where fatigue does not destroy appetite, but enhances the luxury of repose. We are seated under a broad-spreading tree, beside a charming lake; the air is soft and balmy; and the scent of the roast kid and honey, which, with black bread and salad, is our bill of fare, steals gratefully over the senses. What flavour in that kid, what cooling sharpness in the salad! If I were to dine thus to-day, I should probably think both detestable. Why do I remember that dinner? Was it the accessory charm of mountain, lake, and sky—was it the previous exercise, and the mountain air—was it the tender light of the setting sun, or the prospect of being rowed across the lake in indolent repose by two stout women, now preparing the boat? None of these; for all of these had been enjoyed in the Tyrol before, and have been since; yet the only dinner vividly remembered throughout the Tyrol is this particular one of roast kid and honey.

Of course contrast goes for much, but not for all. The effect of exercise is also an element; but it explains nothing alone. There is a peculiar conjuncture required—a fitness in the organism, and a peculiarity in the food. Such a fitness occurred, a few years since, in the Thuringian forest, when a certain wild boar's head spoke eloquently to my sensibilities.

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Often had I eaten that noble swine before—eaten it with approval, nay, with esteem; but never before did it so insidiously flatter the finer propensities of my palate. My wife and I had sent on our luggage by the *malleposte*, having resolved to walk the two first stations, in order to enjoy the scenery and the bright autumnal morning. We started at six, in a high September wind, and spanked along, all sails set, for four hours and a half, including a brief siesta over a cup of coffee. It was a superb walk, and from it we extracted supreme enjoyment. On reaching Arnstadt, we were agreeably fatigued, and rather disagreeably hungry; so that the announcement of "dinner at twelve," when our watches painfully assured us it was only half-past ten, was somewhat depressing; however, there was no alternative; we were too tired to walk, and the only means of beguiling the time was looking through old newspapers and periodicals. At length *table d'hôte* was ready. What else there may have been I do not remember, but never will the flavour of that boar's head vanish from memory. Something may have been due to a sympathetic pleasure in my wife's first acquaintance with the noble viand. Be that as it may, the science of Apicius or Brillat-Savarin never invented anything more delicately flattering to the palate.

The reader is a philosopher, and with that restless curiosity which is always prying behind facts in the hope of detecting the strings of the puppets, wishes to discover the First Principles, or ἄρχαι, of this subject. "Why," he asks himself, or *me*, "these exceptions? Why are so many meals *eaten*, and so few *enjoyed?*" It is indeed a delicate problem. Many delightful dinners, and many enjoyable breakfasts pass away and leave no trace; why should a few persist? One understands how all the delicacies of the season may be rendered indifferent because of the greater attractions in the accessories; but it is not easy to say why food *as* food should on certain occasions assume an unapproached pre-eminence. At my Ratcliffe Highway dinner there was assuredly none of the exhilarating effect of brilliant company, nor the infinitely deeper charm which beams from a pair of loving eyes. All the glory came from the oysters; the gustatory vibrations came from them. But why? I am no Dando, passionately susceptible to the charms of that bivalve. Far from it. Oysters do not excite in me more than a tepid preference. Were these oysters of a quite peculiar succulence, at five a penny? One may reasonably answer, No.

If the reader can see his way to a solution, I can't. I believe it is a first truth. Just as Music and Poetry are not always enjoyed by us with the exquisite rapture of certain moments, though in all moods we may be susceptible to them, so must it be with that other and less recognized Fine Art—the Art of Eating. We are creatures of delicate and variable sensibility, and are not always attuned to the higher raptures of Flavour, though every day we may be agreeably susceptible to food. The golden moments are rare. Can Science teach us to recover and multiply them?

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Cousin Phillis.

PART I.

It is a great thing for a lad when he is first turned into the independence of lodgings. I do not think I ever was so satisfied and proud in my life as when, seventeen, I sate down in a little three-cornered room above a pastry-cook's shop in the county town of Eltham. My father had left me that afternoon, after delivering himself of a few plain precepts, strongly expressed, for my guidance in the new course of life on which I was entering. I was to be a clerk under the engineer who had undertaken to make the little branch line from Eltham to Hornby. My father had got me this situation, which was in a position rather above his own in life; or perhaps I should say, above the station into which he was born and bred; for he was raising himself every year in men's consideration and respect. He was a mechanic by trade, but he had some inventive genius, and a great deal of perseverance, and had devised several valuable improvements in railway machinery. He did not do this for profit, though, as was reasonable, what came in the natural course of things was acceptable; he worked out his ideas because, as he said, "until he could put them into shape, they plagued him by night and by day." But this is enough about my dear father; it is a good thing for a country where there are many like him. He was a sturdy Independent by descent and conviction; and this it was, I believe, which made him place me in the lodgings at the pastry-cook's. The shop was kept by the two sisters of our minister at home; and this was considered as a sort of safeguard to my morals, when I was turned loose upon the temptations of the county town, with a salary of thirty pounds a year.

My father had given up two precious days, and put on his Sunday clothes, in order to bring me to Eltham, and accompany me first to the office, to introduce me to my new master (who was under some obligations to my father for a suggestion), and next to take me to call on the Independent minister of the little congregation at Eltham. And then he left me; and though sorry to part with him, I now began to taste with relish the pleasure of being my own master. I unpacked the hamper that my mother had provided me with, and smelt the pots of preserve with all the delight of a possessor who might break into their contents at any time he pleased. I handled and weighed in my fancy the home-cured ham, which seemed to promise me interminable feasts; and, above all, there was the fine savour of knowing that I might eat of these dainties when I liked, at my sole will, not dependent on the pleasure of any one else, however indulgent. I stowed my eatables away in the little corner cup-

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board—that room was all corners, and everything was placed in a corner, the fire-place, the window, the cupboard; I myself seemed to be the only thing in the middle, and there was hardly room for me. The table was made of a folding leaf under the window, and the window looked out upon the market-place; so the studies for the prosecution of which my father had brought himself to pay extra for a sitting-room for me, ran a considerable chance of being diverted from books to men and women. I was to have my meals with the two elderly Miss Browns in the little parlour behind the three-cornered shop downstairs; my breakfasts and dinners at least, for, as my hours in an evening were likely to be uncertain, my tea or supper was to be an independent meal.

Then, after this pride and satisfaction, came a sense of desolation. I had never been from home before, and I was an only child; and though my father's spoken maxim had been, "Spare the rod, and spoil the child," yet, unconsciously, his heart had yearned after me, and his ways towards me were more tender than he knew, or would have approved of in himself, could he have known. My mother, who never professed sternness, was far more severe than my father: perhaps my boyish faults annoyed her more; for I remember, now that I have written the above words, how she pleaded for me once in my riper years, when I had really offended against my father's sense of right.

But I have nothing to do with that now. It is about cousin Phillis that I am going to write, and as yet I am far enough from even saying who cousin Phillis was.

For some months after I was settled in Eltham, the new employment in which I was engaged—the new independence of my life—occupied all my thoughts. I was at my desk by eight o'clock, home to dinner at one, back at the office by two. The afternoon work was more uncertain than the mornings; it might be the same, or it might be that I had to accompany Mr. Holdsworth, the managing engineer, to some point on the line between Eltham and Hornby. This I always enjoyed, because of the variety, and because of the country we traversed (which was very wild and pretty), and because I was thrown into companionship with Mr. Holdsworth, who held the position of hero in my boyish mind. He was a young man of five-and-twenty or so, and was in a station above mine, both by birth and education; and he had travelled on the Continent, and wore mustachios and whiskers of a somewhat foreign fashion. I was proud of being seen with him. He was really a fine fellow in a good number of ways, and I might have fallen into much worse hands.

Every Saturday I wrote home, telling of my weekly doings—my father had insisted upon this; but there was so little variety in my life that I often found it hard work to fill a letter. On Sundays I went twice to chapel, up a dark narrow entry, to hear droning hymns, and long prayers, and a still longer sermon, preached to a small congregation, of which I was, by nearly a score of years, the youngest member. Occasionally, Mr. Peters, the minister, would ask me home to tea after the

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second service. I dreaded the honour, for I usually sate on the edge of my chair all the evening, and answered solemn questions, put in a deep bass voice, until household prayer-time came, at eight o'clock, when Mrs. Peters came in, smoothing down her apron, and the maid-of-all-work followed, and first a sermon, and then a chapter was read, and a long impromptu prayer followed, till some instinct told Mr. Peters that supper-time had come, and we rose from our knees with hunger for our predominant feeling. Over supper the minister did unbend a little into one or two ponderous jokes, as if to show me that ministers were men, after all. And then at ten o'clock I went home, and enjoyed my long-repressed yawns in the three-cornered room before going to bed.

Dinah and Hannah Dawson, so their names were put on the board above the shop-door—I always called them Miss Dawson and Miss Hannah—considered these visits of mine to Mr. Peters as the greatest honour a young man could have; and evidently thought that if, after such privileges, I did not work out my salvation, I was a sort of modern Judas Iscariot. On the contrary, they shook their heads over my intercourse with Mr. Holdsworth. He had been so kind to me in many ways, that when I cut into my ham, I hovered over the thought of asking him to tea in my room, more especially as the annual fair was being held in Eltham market-place, and the sight of the booths, the merry-go-rounds, the wild-beast shows, and such country pomps, was (as I thought at seventeen) very attractive. But when I ventured to allude to my wish in even distant terms, Miss Hannah caught me up, and spoke of the sinfulness of such sights, and something about wallowing in the mire, and then vaulted into France, and spoke evil of the nation, and all who had ever set foot therein, till, seeing that her anger was concentrating itself into a point, and that that point was Mr. Holdsworth, I thought it would be better to finish my breakfast, and make what haste I could out of the sound of her voice. I rather wondered afterwards to hear her and Miss Dawson counting up their weekly profits with glee, and saying that a pastry-cook's shop in the corner of the market-place, in Eltham fair week, was no such bad thing. However, I never ventured to ask Mr. Holdsworth to my lodgings.

There is not much to tell about this first year of mine at Eltham. But when I was nearly nineteen, and beginning to think of whiskers on my own account, I came to know cousin Phillis, whose very existence had been unknown to me till then. Mr. Holdsworth and I had been out to Heathbridge for a day, working hard. Heathbridge was near Hornby, for our line of railway was above half finished. Of course, a day's outing was a great thing to tell about in my weekly letters; and I fell to describing the country—a fault I was not often guilty of. I told my father of the bogs, all over wild myrtle and soft moss, and shaking ground over which we had to carry our line; and how Mr. Holdsworth and I had gone for our mid-day meals—for we had to stay here for two days and a night—to a pretty village hard by, Heathbridge proper; and how

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I hoped we should often have to go there, for the shaking, uncertain ground was puzzling our engineers—one end of the line going up as soon as the other was weighted down. (I had no thought for the shareholders' interests, as may be seen; we had to make a new line on firmer ground before the junction railway was completed.) I told all this at great length, thankful to fill up my paper. By return letter, I heard that a second-cousin of my mother's was married to the Independent minister of Hornby, Ebenezer Holman by name, and lived at Heathbridge proper; the very Heathbridge I had described, or so my mother believed, for she had never seen her cousin Phillis Green, who was something of an heiress (my father believed), being her father's only child, and old Thomas Green had owned an estate of near upon fifty acres, which must have come to his daughter. My mother's feeling of kinship seemed to have been strongly stirred by the mention of Heathbridge; for my father said she desired me, if ever I went thither again, to make inquiry for the Reverend Ebenezer Holman; and if indeed he lived there, I was further to ask if he had not married one Phillis Green; and if both these questions were answered in the affirmative, I was to go and introduce myself as the only child of Margaret Manning, born Moneypenny. I was enraged at myself for having named Heathbridge at all, when I found what it was drawing down upon me. One Independent minister, as I said to myself, was enough for any man; and here I knew (that is to say, I had been catechized on Sabbath mornings by) Mr. Hunter, our minister at home; and I had had to be civil to old Peters at Eltham, and behave myself for five hours running whenever he asked me to tea at his house; and now, just as I felt the free air blowing about me up at Heathbridge, I was to ferret out another minister, and I should perhaps have to be catechized by him, or else asked to tea at his house. Besides, I did not like pushing myself upon strangers, who perhaps had never heard of my mother's name, and such an odd name as it was—Moneypenny; and if they had, had never cared more for her than she had for them, apparently, until this unlucky mention of Heathbridge.

Still, I would not disobey my parents in such a trifle, however irksome it might be. So the next time our business took me to Heathbridge, and we were dining in the little sanded inn-parlour, I took the opportunity of Mr. Holdsworth's being out of the room, and asked the questions which I was bidden to ask of the rosy-cheeked maid. I was either unintelligible or she was stupid; for she said she did not know, but would ask master; and of course the landlord came in to understand what it was I wanted to know; and I had to bring out all my stammering inquiries before Mr. Holdsworth, who would never have attended to them, I dare say, if I had not blushed, and blundered, and made such a fool of myself.

"Yes," the landlord said, "the Hope Farm was in Heathbridge proper, and the owner's name was Holman, and he was an Independent minister, and, as far as the landlord could tell, his wife's Christian name was Phillis, anyhow her maiden name was Green."

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"Relations of yours?" asked Mr. Holdsworth.

"No, sir—only my mother's second-cousins. Yes, I suppose they are relations. But I never saw them in my life."

"The Hope Farm is not a stone's throw from here," said the officious landlord, going to the window. "If you carry your eye over yon bed of hollyhocks, over the damson-trees in the orchard yonder, you may see a stack of queer-like stone chimneys. Them is the Hope Farm chimneys; it's an old place, though Holman keeps it in good order."

Mr. Holdsworth had risen from the table with more promptitude than I had, and was standing by the window, looking. At the landlord's last words, he turned round, smiling,—"It is not often that parsons know how to keep land in order, is it?"

"Beg pardon, sir, but I must speak as I find; and Minister Holman—we call the Church clergyman here 'parson,' sir; he would be a bit jealous if he heard a Dissenter called parson—Minister Holman knows what he's about as well as e'er a farmer in the neighbourhood. He gives up five days a week to his own work, and two to the Lord's; and it is difficult to say which he works hardest at. He spends Saturday and Sunday a-writing sermons and a-visiting his flock at Hornby; and at five o'clock on Monday morning he'll be guiding his plough in the Hope Farm yonder just as well as if he could neither read nor write. But your dinner will be getting cold, gentlemen."

So we went back to table. After a while, Mr. Holdsworth broke the silence:—"If I were you, Manning, I'd look up these relations of yours. You can go and see what they're like while we're waiting for Dobson's estimates, and I'll smoke a cigar in the garden meanwhile."

"Thank you, sir. But I don't know them, and I don't think I want to know them."

"What did you ask all those questions for, then?" said he, looking quickly up at me. He had no notion of doing or saying things without a purpose. I did not answer, so he continued,—"Make up your mind, and go off and see what this farmer-minister is like, and come back and tell me—I should like to hear."

I was so in the habit of yielding to his authority, or influence, that I never thought of resisting, but went on my errand, though I remember feeling as if I would rather have had my head cut off. The landlord, who had evidently taken an interest in the event of our discussion in a way that country landlords have, accompanied me to the house-door, and gave me repeated directions, as if I was likely to miss my way in two hundred yards. But I listened to him, for I was glad of the delay, to screw up my courage for the effort of facing unknown people and introducing myself. I went along the lane, I recollect, switching at all the taller roadside weeds, till, after a turn or two, I found myself close in front of the Hope Farm. There was a garden between the house and the shady, grassy lane; I afterwards found that this garden was called the court; perhaps because there was a low wall round it, with an iron

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railing on the top of the wall, and two great gates between pillars crowned with stone balls for a state entrance to the flagged path leading up to the front door. It was not the habit of the place to go in either by these great gates or by the front door; the gates, indeed, were locked, as I found, though the door stood wide open. I had to go round by a side-path lightly worn on a broad grassy way, which led past the court-wall, past a horse-mount, half covered with stone-crop and the little wild yellow fumitory, to another door—"the curate," as I found it was termed by the master of the house, while the front door, "handsome and all for show," was termed the "rector." I knocked with my hand upon the "curate" door; a tall girl, about my own age, as I thought, came and opened it, and stood there silent, waiting to know my errand. I see her now—cousin Phillis. The westering sun shone full upon her, and made a slanting stream of light into the room within. She was dressed in dark blue cotton of some kind; up to her throat, down to her wrists, with a little frill of the same wherever it touched her white skin. And such a white skin as it was! I have never seen the like. She had light hair, nearer yellow than any other colour. She looked me steadily in the face with large, quiet eyes, wondering, but untroubled by the sight of a stranger. I thought it odd that so old, so full-grown as she was, she should wear a pinafore over her gown.

Before I had quite made up my mind what to say in reply to her mute inquiry of what I wanted there, a woman's voice called out, "Who is it, Phillis? If it is any one for butter-milk send them round to the back-door."

I thought I could rather speak to the owner of that voice than to the girl before me; so I passed her, and stood at the entrance of a room, hat in hand, for this side-door opened straight into the hall or house-place where the family sate when work was done. There was a brisk little woman of forty or so ironing some huge muslin cravats under the light of a long vine-shaded casement window. She looked at me distrustfully till I began to speak. "My name is Paul Manning," said I; but I saw she did not know the name. "My mother's name was Moneypenny," said I,—"Margaret Moneypenny."

"And she married one John Manning, of Birmingham," said Mrs. Holman, eagerly. "And you'll be her son. Sit down! I am right glad to see you. To think of your being Margaret's son! Why, she was almost a child not so long ago. Well, to be sure, it is five-and-twenty years ago. And what brings you into these parts?"

She sate down herself, as if oppressed by her curiosity as to all the five-and-twenty years that had passed by since she had seen my mother. Her daughter Phillis took up her knitting—a long grey worsted man's stocking, I remember—and knitted away without looking at her work. I felt that the steady gaze of those deep grey eyes was upon me, though once, when I stealthily raised mine to hers, she was examining something on the wall above my head.

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When I had answered all my cousin Holman's questions, she heaved a long breath, and said, "To think of Margaret Moneypenny's boy being in our house! I wish the minister was here. Phillis, in what field is thy father to-day?"

"In the five-acre; they are beginning to cut the corn."

"He'll not like being sent for, then, else I should have liked you to have seen the minister. But the five-acre is a good step off. You shall have a glass of wine and a bit of cake before you stir from this house, though. You're bound to go, you say, or else the minister comes in mostly when the men have their four o'clock."

"I must go—I ought to have been off before now."

"Here, then, Phillis, take the keys." She gave her daughter some whispered directions, and Phillis left the room.

"She is my cousin, is she not?" I asked. I knew she was, but somehow I wanted to talk of her, and did not know how to begin.

"Yes—Phillis Holman. She is our only child—now."

Either from that "now," or from a strange momentary wistfulness in her eyes, I knew that there had been more children, who were now dead.

"How old is cousin Phillis?" said I, scarcely venturing on the new name, it seemed too prettily familiar for me to call her by it; but cousin Holman took no notice of it, answering straight to the purpose.

"Seventeen last May-day; but the minister does not like to hear me calling it May-day," said she, checking herself with a little awe. "Phillis was seventeen on the first day of May last," she repeated in an emended edition.

"And I am nineteen in another month," thought I, to myself; I don't know why.

Then Phillis came in, carrying a tray with wine and cake upon it.

"We keep a house-servant," said cousin Holman, "but it is churning day, and she is busy." It was meant as a little proud apology for her daughter's being the handmaiden.

"I like doing it, mother," said Phillis, in her grave, full voice.

I felt as if I were somebody in the Old Testament—who, I could not recollect—being served and waited upon by the daughter of the host. Was I like Abraham's steward, when Rebekah gave him to drink at the well? I thought Isaac had not gone the pleasantest way to work in winning him a wife. But Phillis never thought about such things. She was a stately, gracious young woman, in the dress and with the simplicity of a child.

As I had been taught, I drank to the health of my new-found cousin and her husband; and then I ventured to name my cousin Phillis with a little bow of my head towards her; but I was too awkward to look and see how she took my compliment. "I must go now," said I, rising.

Neither of the women had thought of sharing in the wine; cousin Holman had broken a bit of cake for form's sake.

"I wish the minister had been within," said his wife, rising too.

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Secretly I was very glad he was not. I did not take kindly to ministers in those days, and I thought he must be a particular kind of man, by his objecting to the term May-day. But before I went, cousin Holman made me promise that I would come back on the Saturday following and spend Sunday with them; when I should see something of "the minister."

"Come on Friday, if you can," were her last words as she stood at the curate-door, shading her eyes from the sinking sun with her hand.

Inside the house sate cousin Phillis, her golden hair, her dazzling complexion, lighting up the corner of the vine-shadowed room. She had not risen when I bade her good-by; she had looked at me straight as she said her tranquil words of farewell.

I found Mr. Holdsworth down at the line, hard at work superintending. As soon as he had a pause, he said, "Well, Manning, what are the new cousins like? How do preaching and farming seem to get on together? If the minister turns out to be practical as well as reverend, I shall begin to respect him."

But he hardly attended to my answer, he was so much more occupied with directing his work-people. Indeed, my answer did not come very readily; and the most distinct part of it was the mention of the invitation that had been given me.

"Oh, of course you can go—and on Friday, too, if you like; there is no reason why not this week; and you've done a long spell of work this time, old fellow."

I thought that I did not want to go on Friday; but when the day came, I found that I should prefer going to staying away, so I availed myself of Mr. Holdsworth's permission, and went over to Hope Farm some time in the afternoon, a little later than my last visit. I found the "curate" open to admit the soft September air, so tempered by the warmth of the sun, that it was warmer out of doors than in, although the wooden log lay smouldering in front of a heap of hot ashes on the hearth. The vine-leaves over the window had a tinge more yellow, their edges were here and there scorched and browned; there was no ironing about, and cousin Holman sate just outside the house, mending a shirt. Phillis was at her knitting indoors: it seemed as if she had been at it all the week. The many-speckled fowls were pecking about in the farm-yard beyond, and the milk-cans glittered with brightness, hung out to sweeten. The court was so full of flowers that they crept out upon the low-covered wall and horse-mount, and were even to be found self-sown upon the turf that bordered the path to the back of the house. I fancied that my Sunday coat was scented for days afterwards by the bushes of sweetbriar and the fraxinella that perfumed the air. From time to time cousin Holman put her hand into a covered basket at her feet, and threw handsful of corn down for the pigeons that cooed and fluttered in the air around, in expectation of this treat.

I had a thorough welcome as soon as she saw me. "Now this is

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kind—this is right down friendly," shaking my hand warmly. "Phillis, your cousin Manning is come!"

"Call me Paul, will you?" said I; "they call me so at home, and Manning in the office."

"Well, Paul, then. Your room is all ready for you, Paul, for, as I said to the minister, 'I'll have it ready whether he comes o' Friday or not.' And the minister said he must go up to the Ashfield whether you were to come or not; but he would come home betimes to see if you were here. I'll show you to your room, and you can wash the dust off a bit."

After I came down, I think she did not quite know what to do with me; or she might think that I was dull; or she might have work to do in which I hindered her; for she called Phillis, and bade her put on her bonnet, and go with me to the Ashfield, and find father. So we set off, I in a little flutter of a desire to make myself agreeable, but wishing that my companion were not quite so tall; for she was above me in height. While I was wondering how to begin our conversation, she took up the words.

"I suppose, cousin Paul, you have to be very busy at your work all day long in general."

"Yes, we have to be in the office at half-past eight; and we have an hour for dinner, and then we go at it again till eight or nine."

"Then you have not much time for reading."

"No," said I, with a sudden consciousness that I did not make the most of what leisure I had.

"No more have I. Father always gets an hour before going a-field in the mornings, but mother does not like me to get up so early."

"My mother is always wanting me to get up earlier when I am at home."

"What time do you get up?"

"Oh!—ah!—sometimes half-past six; not often though;" for I remembered only twice that I had done so during the past summer.

She turned her head and looked at me.

"Father is up at three; and so was mother till she was ill. I should like to be up at four."

"Your father up at three! Why, what has he to do at that hour?"

"What has he not to do? He has his private exercise in his own room; he always rings the great bell which calls the men to milking; he rouses up Betty, our maid; as often as not he gives the horses their feed before the man is up—for Jem, who takes care of the horses, is an old man; and father is always loth to disturb him; he looks at the calves, and the shoulders, heels, traces, chaff, and corn before the horses go a-field; he has often to whip-cord the plough-whips; he sees the hogs fed; he looks into the swill-tubs, and writes his orders for what is wanted for food for man and beast; yes, and for fuel, too. And then, if he has a bit of time to spare, he comes in and reads with me—but only English; we keep Latin for the evenings, that we may have time to enjoy it; and then he calls in the man to breakfast, and cuts the boys' bread and cheese; and

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sees their wooden bottles filled, and sends them off to their work;—and by this time it is half-past six, and we have our breakfast. There is father," she exclaimed, pointing out to me a man in his shirt-sleeves, taller by the head than the other two with whom he was working. We only saw him through the leaves of the ash-trees growing in the hedge, and I thought I must be confusing the figures, or mistaken: that man still looked like a very powerful labourer, and had none of the precise demureness of appearance which I had always imagined was the characteristic of a minister. It was the Reverend Ebenezer Holman, however. He gave us a nod as we entered the stubble-field; and I think he would have come to meet us but that he was in the middle of giving some directions to his men. I could see that Phillis was built more after his type than her mother's. He, like his daughter, was largely made, and of a fair, ruddy complexion, whereas hers was brilliant and delicate. His hair had been yellow or sandy, but now was grizzled. Yet his grey hairs betokened no failure in strength. I never saw a more powerful man—deep chest, lean flanks, well-planted head. By this time we were nearly up to him; and he interrupted himself and stepped forwards; holding out his hand to me, but addressing Phillis.

"Well, my lass, this is cousin Manning, I suppose. Wait a minute, young man, and I'll put on my coat, and give you a decorous and formal welcome. But——Ned Hall, there ought to be a water-furrow across this land: it's a nasty, stiff, clayey, dauby bit of ground, and thou and I must fall to, come next Monday—I beg your pardon, cousin Manning—and there's old Jem's cottage wants a bit of thatch; you can do that job to-morrow while I am busy." Then, suddenly changing the tone of his deep bass voice to an odd suggestion of chapels and preachers, he added, "Now, I will give out the psalm, 'Come all harmonious tongues,' to be sung to 'Mount Ephraim' tune."

He lifted his spade in his hand, and began to beat time with it; the two labourers seemed to know both words and music, though I did not; and so did Phillis: her rich voice followed her father's as he set the tune; and the men came in with more uncertainty, but still harmoniously. Phillis looked at me once or twice with a little surprise at my silence; but I did not know the words. There we five stood, bareheaded, excepting Phillis, in the tawny stubble-field, from which all the shocks of corn had not yet been carried—a dark wood on one side, where the wood-pigeons were cooing; blue distance seen through the ash-trees on the other. Somehow, I think that if I had known the words, and could have sung, my throat would have been choked up by the feeling of the unaccustomed scene.

The hymn was ended, and the men had drawn off before I could stir. I saw the minister beginning to put on his coat, and looking at me with friendly inspection in his gaze, before I could rouse myself.

"I dare say you railway gentlemen don't wind up the day with singing a psalm together," said he; "but it is not a bad practice, not a

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bad practice. We have had it a bit earlier to-day for hospitality's sake —that's all."

I had nothing particular to say to this, though I was thinking a great deal. From time to time I stole a look at my companion. His coat was black, and so was his waistcoat; neckcloth he had none, his strong full throat being bare above the snow-white shirt. He wore drab-coloured knee-breeches, grey worsted stockings (I thought I knew the maker), and strong-nailed shoes. He carried his hat in his hand, as if he liked to feel the coming breeze lifting his hair. After a while, I saw that the father took hold of the daughter's hand, and so, they holding each other, went along towards home. We had to cross a lane. In it there were two little children, one lying prone on the grass in a passion of crying, the other standing stock still, with its finger in its mouth, the large tears slowly rolling down its cheeks for sympathy. The cause of their distress was evident: there was a broken brown pitcher, and a little pool of spilt milk on the road.

"Hollo! Hollo! What's all this?" said the minister. "Why, what have you been about, Tommy," lifting the little petticoated lad, who was lying sobbing, with one vigorous arm. Tommy looked at him with surprise in his round eyes, but no affright — they were evidently old acquaintances.

"Mammy's jug!" said he, at last, beginning to cry afresh.

"Well! and will crying piece mammy's jug, or pick up spilt milk? How did you manage it, Tommy?"

"He" (jerking his head at the other) "and me was running races.

"Tommy said he could beat me," put in the other.

"Now, I wonder what will make you two silly lads mind, and not run races again with a pitcher of milk between you," said the minister, as if musing. "I might flog you, and so save mammy the trouble; for I dare say she'll do it if I don't." The fresh burst of whimpering from both showed the probability of this. "Or I might take you to the Hope Farm, and give you some more milk; but then you'd be running races again, and my milk would follow that to the ground, and make another white pool. I think the flogging would be best—don't you?"

"We would never run races no more," said the elder of the two.

"Then you'd not be boys; you'd be angels."

"No, we shouldn't."

"Why not?"

They looked into each other's eyes for an answer to this puzzling question. At length, one said, "Angels is dead folk."

"Come; we'll not get too deep into theology. What do you think of my lending you a tin can with a lid to carry the milk home in? That would not break, at any rate; though I would not answer for the milk not spilling if you ran races. That's it!"

He had dropped his daughter's hand, and now held out each of his to the little fellows. Phillis and I followed, and listened to the prattle

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which the minister's companions now poured out to him, and which he was evidently enjoying. At a certain point, there was a sudden burst of the tawny, ruddy-evening landscape. The minister turned round and quoted a line or two of Latin.

"It's wonderful," said he, "how exactly Virgil has hit the enduring epithets, nearly two thousand years ago, and in Italy; and yet how it describes to a T what is now lying before us in the parish of Heathbridge, county ——, England."

"I dare say it does," said I, all aglow with shame, for I had forgotten the little Latin I ever knew.

The minister shifted his eyes to Phillis's face; it mutely gave him back the sympathetic appreciation that I, in my ignorance, could not bestow.

"Oh! this is worse than the catechism," thought I; "that was only remembering words."

"Phillis, lass, thou must go home with these lads, and tell their mother all about the race and the milk. Mammy must always know the truth," now speaking to the children. "And tell her, too, from me that I have got the best birch rod in the parish; and that if she ever thinks her children want a flogging she must bring them to me, and, if I think they deserve it, I'll give it them better than she can." So Phillis led the children towards the dairy, somewhere in the back yard, and I followed the minister in through the "curate" into the house-place.

"Their mother," said he, "is a bit of a vixen, and apt to punish her children without rhyme or reason. I try to keep the parish rod as well as the parish-bull."

He sate down in the three-cornered chair by the fireside, and looked around the empty room.

"Where's the missus?" said he to himself. But she was there in a minute; it was her regular plan to give him his welcome home—by a look, by a touch, nothing more—as soon as she could after his return, and he had missed her now. Regardless of my presence, he went over the day's doings to her; and then, getting up, he said he must go and make himself "reverend," and that then we would have a cup of tea in the parlour. The parlour was a large room with two casemented windows on the other side of the broad flagged passage leading from the rector-door to the wide staircase, with its shallow, polished oaken steps, on which no carpet was ever laid. The parlour-floor was covered in the middle by a home-made carpeting of needlework and list. One or two quaint family pictures of the Holman family hung round the walls; the fire-grate and irons were much ornamented with brass; and on a table against the wall between the windows, a great beau-pot of flowers was placed upon the folio volumes of Matthew Henry's Bible. It was a compliment to me to use this room, and I tried to be grateful for it; but we never had our meals there after that first day, and I was glad of it; for the large house-place, living-room, dining-room, whichever you might like to call it, was twice as comfortable and cheerful. There was a rug in front of the great

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large fire-place, and an oven by the grate, and a crook, with the kettle hanging from it, over the bright wood-fire; everything that ought to be black and polished in that room was black and polished; and the flags, and window-curtains, and such things as were to be white and clean, were just spotless in their purity. Opposite to the fire-place, extending the whole length of the room, was an oaken shovel-board, with the right incline for a skilful player to send the weights into the prescribed space. There were baskets of white work about, and a small shelf of books hung against the wall, books used for reading, and not for propping up a beau-pot of flowers. I took down one or two of those books once when I was left alone in the house-place on the first evening—Virgil, Cæsar, a Greek grammar—oh, dear ah me! and Phillis Holman's name in each of them! I shut them up, and put them back in their places, and walked as far away from the bookshelf as I could. Yes, and I gave my cousin Phillis a wide berth, although she was sitting at her work quietly enough, and her hair was looking more golden, her dark eyelashes longer, her round pillar of a throat whiter than ever. We had done tea, and we had returned into the house-place that the minister might smoke his pipe without fear of contaminating the drab damask window-curtains of the parlour. He had made himself "reverend" by putting on one of the voluminous white muslin neckcloths that I had seen cousin Holman ironing that first visit I had paid to the Hope Farm, and by making one or two other unimportant changes in his dress. He sate looking steadily at me, but whether he saw me or not I cannot tell. At the time I fancied that he did, and was gauging me in some unknown fashion in his secret mind. Every now and then he took his pipe out of his mouth, knocked out the ashes, and asked me some fresh question. As long as these related to my acquirements or my reading, I shuffled uneasily and did not know what to answer. By-and-by he got round to the more practical subject of railroads, and on this I was more at home. I really had taken an interest in my work; nor would Mr. Holdsworth, indeed, have kept me in his employment if I had not given my mind as well as my time to it; and I was, besides, full of the difficulties which beset us just then, owing to our not being able to find a steady bottom on the Heathbridge moss, over which we wished to carry our line. In the midst of all my eagerness in speaking about this, I could not help being struck with the extreme pertinence of his questions. I do not mean that he did not show ignorance of many of the details of engineering: that was to have been expected; but on the premises he had got hold of, he thought clearly and reasoned logically. Phillis—so like him as she was both in body and mind—kept stopping at her work and looking at me, trying to fully understand all that I said. I felt she did; and perhaps it made me take more pains in using clear expressions, and arranging my words, than I otherwise should.

"She shall see I know something worth knowing, though it mayn't be her dead-and-gone languages," thought I.

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"I see," said the minister, at length. "I understand it all. You've a clear, good head of your own, my lad,—choose how you came by it."

"From my father," said I, proudly. "Have you not heard of his discovery of a new method of shunting? It was in the *Gazette*. It was patented. I thought every one had heard of Manning's patent winch."

"We don't know who invented the alphabet," said he, half smiling, and taking up his pipe.

"No, I dare say not, sir," replied I, half offended; "that's so long ago."

Puff—puff—puff.

"But your father must be a notable man. I heard of him once before; and it is not many a one fifty miles away whose fame reaches Heathbridge."

"My father is a notable man, sir. It is not me that says so; it is Mr. Holdsworth, and—and everybody."

"He is right to stand up for his father," said cousin Holman, as if she were pleading for me.

I chafed inwardly, thinking that my father needed no one to stand up for him. He was man sufficient for himself.

"Yes—he is right," said the minister, placidly. "Right, because it comes from his heart—right, too, as I believe, in point of fact. Else there is many a young cockerel that will stand upon a dunghill and crow about his father, by way of making his own plumage to shine. I should like to know thy father," he went on, turning straight to me, with a kindly, frank look in his eyes.

But I was vexed, and would take no notice. Presently, having finished his pipe, he got up and left the room. Phillis put her work hastily down, and went after him. In a minute or two she returned, and sate down again. Not long after, and before I had quite recovered my good temper, he opened the door out of which he had passed, and called to me to come to him. I went across a narrow stone passage into a strange, many-cornered room, not ten feet in area, part study, part counting-house, looking into the farm-yard; with a desk to sit at, a desk to stand at, a spittoon, a set of shelves with old divinity books upon them; another, smaller, filled with books on farriery, farming, manures, and such subjects, with pieces of paper containing memoranda stuck against the whitewashed walls with wafers, nails, pins, anything that came readiest to hand; a box of carpenter's tools on the floor, and some manuscripts in short-hand on the desk.

He turned round half laughing. "That foolish girl of mine thinks I have vexed you"—putting his large, powerful hand on my shoulder. "'Nay,' says I; 'kindly meant is kindly taken'—is it not so?"

"It was not quite, sir," replied I, vanquished by his manner; "but it shall be in future."

"Come, that's right. You and I shall be friends. Indeed, it's not many a one I would bring in here. But I was reading a book this

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morning, and I could not make it out; it is a book that was left here by mistake one day; I had subscribed to Brother Robinson's sermons; and I was glad to see this instead of them, for sermons though they be, they're . . . well, never mind! I took 'em both, and made my old coat do a bit longer; but all's fish that comes to my net. I have fewer books than leisure to read them, and I have a prodigious big appetite. Here it is."

It was a volume of stiff mechanics, involving many technical terms, and some rather deep mathematics. These last, which would have puzzled me, seemed easy enough to him; all that he wanted was the explanations of the technical words, which I could easily give.

While he was looking through the book to find the places where he had been puzzled, my wandering eye caught on some of the papers on the wall, and I could not help reading one, which has stuck by me ever since. At first, it seemed a kind of weekly diary; but then I saw that the seven days were portioned out for special prayers and intercessions: Monday for his family, Tuesday for enemies, Wednesday for the Independent churches, Thursday for all other churches, Friday for persons afflicted, Saturday for his own soul, Sunday for all wanderers and sinners, that they might be brought home to the fold.

We were called back into the house-place to have supper. A door opening into the kitchen was opened; and all stood up in both rooms, while the minister, tall, large, one hand resting on the spread table, the other lifted up, said, in the deep voice that would have been loud had it not been so full and rich, but with the peculiar accent or twang that I believe is considered devout by some people, "Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, let us do all to the glory of God."

The supper was an immense meat-pie. We of the house-place were helped first; then the minister hit the handle of his buck-horn carving-knife on the table once, and said,—

"Now or never," which meant, did any of us want any more; and when we had all declined, either by silence or by words, he knocked twice with his knife on the table, and Betty came in through the open door, and carried off the great dish to the kitchen, where an old man and a young one, and a help-girl, were awaiting their meal.

"Shut the door, if you will," said the minister to Betty.

"That's in honour of you," said cousin Holman, in a tone of satisfaction, as the door was shut. "When we've no stranger with us, the minister is so fond of keeping the door open, and talking to the men and maids, just as much as to Phillis and me."

"It brings us all together like a household just before we meet as a household in prayer," said he, in explanation. "But to go back to what we were talking about—can you tell me of any simple book on dynamics that I could put in my pocket, and study a little at leisure times in the day?"

"Leisure times, father?" said Phillis, with a nearer approach to a smile than I had yet seen on her face.

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"Yes; leisure times, daughter. There is many an odd minute lost in waiting for other folk; and now that railroads are coming so near us, it behoves us to know something about them."

I thought of his own description of his "prodigious big appetite" for learning. And he had a good appetite of his own for the more material victual before him. But I saw, or fancied I saw, that he had some rule for himself in the matter both of food and drink.

As soon as supper was done the household assembled for prayer. It was a long impromptu evening prayer; and it would have seemed desultory enough had I not had a glimpse of the kind of day that preceded it, and so been able to find a clue to the thoughts that preceded the disjointed utterances; for he kept there, kneeling down in the centre of a circle, his eyes shut, his outstretched hands pressed palm to palm—sometimes with a long pause of silence, as if waiting to see if there was anything else he wished to "lay before the Lord" (to use his own expression)—before he concluded with the blessing. He prayed for the cattle and live creatures, rather to my surprise; for my attention had begun to wander, till it was recalled by the familiar words.

And here I must not forget to name an odd incident at the conclusion of the prayer, and before we had risen from our knees (indeed before Betty was well awake, for she made a nightly practice of having a sound nap, her weary head lying on her stalwart arms); the minister, still kneeling in our midst, but with his eyes wide open, and his arms dropped by his side, spoke to the elder man, who turned round on his knees to attend. "John, didst see that Daisy had her warm mash to-night; for we must not neglect the means, John—two quarts of gruel, a spoonful of ginger, and a gill of beer—the poor beast needs it, and I fear it slipped out of my mind to tell thee; and here was I asking a blessing and neglecting the means, which is a mockery," said he, dropping his voice.

Before we went to bed he told me he should see little or nothing more of me during my visit, which was to end on Sunday evening, as he always gave up both Saturday and Sabbath to his work in the ministry. I remembered that the landlord at the inn had told me this on the day when I first inquired about these new relations of mine; and I did not dislike the opportunity which I saw would be afforded me of becoming more acquainted with cousin Holman and Phillis, though I earnestly hoped that the latter would not attack me on the subject of the dead languages.

I went to bed, and dreamed that I was as tall as cousin Phillis, and had a sudden and miraculous growth of whisker, and a still more miraculous acquaintance with Latin and Greek. Alas! I wakened up still a short, beardless lad, with "*tempus fugit*" for my sole remembrance of the little Latin I had once learnt. While I was dressing, a bright thought came over me: I could question cousin Phillis, instead of her questioning me, and so manage to keep the choice of the subjects of conversation in my own power.

Early as it was, every one had breakfasted, and my basin of bread and

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milk was put on the oven-top to await my coming down. Every one was gone about their work. The first to come into the house-place was Phillis with a basket of eggs. Faithful to my resolution, I asked,—

"What are those?"

She looked at me for a moment, and then said gravely—

"Potatoes!"

"No! they are not," said I. "They are eggs. What do you mean by saying they are potatoes?"

"What do you mean by asking me what they were, when they were plain to be seen?" retorted she.

We were both getting a little angry with each other.

"I don't know. I wanted to begin to talk to you; and I was afraid you would talk to me about books as you did yesterday. I have not read much; and you and the minister have read so much."

"I have not," said she. "But you are our guest; and mother says I must make it pleasant to you. We won't talk of books. What must we talk about?"

"I don't know. How old are you?"

"Seventeen last May. How old are you?"

"I am nineteen. Older than you by nearly two years," said I, drawing myself up to my full height.

"I should not have thought you were above sixteen," she replied, as quietly as if she were not saying the most provoking thing she possibly could. Then came a pause.

"What are you going to do now?" asked I.

"I should be dusting the bed-chambers; but mother said I had better stay and make it pleasant to you," said she, a little plaintively, as if dusting rooms was far the easiest task.

"Will you take me to see the live-stock? I like animals, though I don't know much about them."

"Oh, do you? I am so glad! I was afraid you would not like animals, as you did not like books."

I wondered why she said this. I think it was because she had begun to fancy all our tastes must be dissimilar. We went together all through the farm-yard; we fed the poultry, she kneeling down with her pinafore full of corn and meal, and tempting the little timid, downy chickens upon it, much to the anxiety of the fussy ruffled hen, their mother. She called to the pigeons, who fluttered down at the sound of her voice. She and I examined the great sleek cart-horses; sympathized in our dislike of pigs; fed the calves; coaxed the sick cow, Daisy; and admired the others out at pasture; and came back tired and hungry and dirty at dinner-time, having quite forgotten that there were such things as dead languages, and consequently capital friends.

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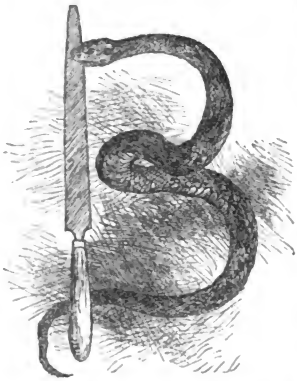
"Strange to Say, on Club Paper."



BEFORE the Duke of York's column, and between the Athenæum and United Service Clubs, I have seen more than once, on the esplanade, a preacher holding forth to a little congregation of *badauds* and street-boys, whom he entertains with a discourse on the crimes of a rapacious aristocracy, or warns of the imminent peril of their own souls. Sometimes this orator is made to "move on" by brutal policemen. Sometimes, on a Sunday, he points to a white head or two visible in the windows of the clubs to the right and left of him, and volunteers a statement that those quiet and elderly Sabbath-breakers will very soon be called from this world to another, where their lot will by no means be so comfortable as that which the reprobates enjoy here, in their arm-chairs by their snug fires.

At the end of last month, had I been a Pall Mall preacher, I would have liked to send a whip round to all the clubs in St. James's, and convoke the few members remaining in London to hear a discourse *sub Dio* on a text from the *Observer* newspaper. I would have taken post under the statue of Fame, say, where she stands distributing wreaths to the three Crimean Guardsmen. (The crossing-sweeper does not obstruct the path, and I suppose is away at his villa on Sundays.) And, when the congregation was pretty quiet, I would have begun :—

In the *Observer* of the 27th September, 1863, in the fifth page and the fourth column, it is thus written :—

"The codicil appended to the will of the late Lord Clyde, executed at Chatham, and bearing the signature of Clyde, F.M., is written, strange to say, on a sheet of paper *bearing the Athenæum Club mark*."

What the codicil is, my dear brethren, it is not our business to inquire. It conveys a benefaction to a faithful and attached friend of the good field-marshal. The gift may be a lakh of rupees, or it may be a house and its contents—furniture, plate, and wine-cellar. My friends, I know the wine-merchant, and, for the sake of the legatee, hope heartily that the stock is large.

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Am I wrong, dear brethren, in supposing that you expect a preacher to say a seasonable word on death here? If you don't, I fear you are but little familiar with the habits of preachers, and are but lax hearers of sermons. We might contrast the vault where the warrior's remains lie shrouded and coffined, with that in which his worldly provision of wine is stowed away. Spain and Portugal and France—all the lands which supplied his store—as hardy and obedient subaltern, as resolute captain, as colonel daring but prudent—he has visited the fields of all. In India and China he marches always unconquered; or at the head of his dauntless Highland brigade he treads the Crimean snow; or he rides from conquest to conquest in India once more; succouring his countrymen in the hour of their utmost need; smiting down the scared mutiny, and trampling out the embers of rebellion; at the head of a heroic army, a consummate chief. And now his glorious old sword is sheathed, and his honours are won; and he has bought him a house, and stored it with modest cheer for his friends (the good old man put water in his own wine, and a glass or two sufficed him)—behold the end comes, and his legatee inherits these modest possessions by virtue of a codicil to his lordship's will, written, "*strange to say, upon a sheet of paper bearing the Athenæum Club mark.*"

It is to this part of the text, my brethren, that I propose to address myself particularly, and if the remarks I make are offensive to any of you, you know the doors of our meeting-house are open, and you can walk out when you will. Around us are magnificent halls and palaces frequented by such a multitude of men as not even the Roman Forum assembled together. Yonder are the Martium and the Palladium. Next to the Palladium is the elegant Viatorium, which Barry gracefully stole from Rome. By its side is the massive Reformatorium: and the—the Ultratorium rears its granite columns beyond. Extending down the street palace after palace rises magnificent, and under their lofty roofs warriors and lawyers, merchants and nobles, scholars and seamen, the wealthy, the poor, the busy, the idle assemble. Into the halls built down this little street and its neighbourhood the principal men of all London come to hear or impart the news; and the affairs of the state or of private individuals, the quarrels of empires or of authors, the movements of the court or the splendid vagaries of fashion, the intrigues of statesmen or of persons of another sex yet more wily, the last news of battles in the great occidental continents, nay, the latest betting for the horse-races, or the advent of a dancer at the theatre—all that men do is discussed in these Pall Mall agoræ, where we of London daily assemble.

Now among so many talkers, consider how many false reports must fly about: in such multitudes imagine how many disappointed men there must be; how many chatterboxes; how many feeble and credulous (whereof I mark some specimens in my congregation); how many mean, rancorous, prone to believe ill of their betters, eager to find fault; and then, my brethren, fancy how the words of my text must have been read

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and received in Pall Mall! (I perceive several of the congregation looking most uncomfortable. One old boy with a dyed moustache turns purple in the face, and struts back to the Martium: another, with a shrug of the shoulder and a murmur of "Rubbish," slinks away in the direction of the Togatorium, and the preacher continues.) The will of Field-Marshal Lord Clyde—signed *at Chatham*, mind, where his lordship died—is written, *strange to say*, on a sheet of paper bearing the Athenæum Club mark!

The inference is obvious. A man cannot get Athenæum paper except at the Athenæum. Such paper is not sold at Chatham, where the last codicil to his lordship's will is dated. And so the painful belief is forced upon us, that a Peer, a Field-Marshal, wealthy, respected, illustrious, could pocket paper at his club, and carry it away with him to the country. One fancies the hall porter conscious of the old lord's iniquity, and holding down his head as the marshal passes the door. What is that roll which his lordship carries? Is it his marshal's bâton gloriously won? No; it is a roll of foolscap conveyed from the club. What has he on his breast, under his great-coat? Is it his Star of India? No; it is a bundle of envelopes, bearing the head of Minerva, some sealing-wax, and a half-score of pens.

Let us imagine how in the hall of one or other of these clubs this strange anecdote will be discussed.

"Notorious screw," says Sneer. "The poor old fellow's avarice has long been known."

"Suppose he wishes to imitate the Duke of Marlborough," says Simper.

"Habit of looting contracted in India, you know; ain't so easy to get over, you know," says Snigger.

"When officers dined with him in India," remarks Solemn, "it was notorious that the spoons were all of a different pattern."

"Perhaps it isn't true. Suppose he wrote his paper at the club?" interposes Jones.

"It is dated at Chatham, my good man," says Brown. "A man if he is in London, says he is in London. A man if he is in Rochester, says he is in Rochester. This man happens to forget that he is using the club paper: and he happens to be found out: many men *don't* happen to be found out. I've seen literary fellows at clubs writing their rubbishing articles; I have no doubt they take away reams of paper. They crib thoughts: why shouldn't they crib stationery? One of your literary vagabonds who is capable of stabbing a reputation, who is capable of telling any monstrous falsehood to support his party, is surely capable of stealing a ream of paper."

"Well, well, we have all our weaknesses," sighs Robinson. "Seen that article, Thompson, in the *Observer* about Lord Clyde and the club paper? You'll find it upstairs. In the third column of the fifth page towards the bottom of the page. I suppose he was so poor he couldn't afford to buy a quire of paper. Hadn't fourpence in the world. Oh, no!"

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"And they want to get up a testimonial to this man's memory—a statue or something!" cries Jawkins. "A man who wallows in wealth and takes paper away from his club! I don't say he is not brave. Brutal courage most men have. I don't say he was not a good officer: a man with such experience *must* have been a good officer, unless he was born fool. But to think of this man loaded with honours—though of a low origin—so lost to self-respect as actually to take away the Athenæum paper! These parvenus, sir, betray their origin—betray their origin. I said to my wife this very morning, 'Mrs. Jawkins,' I said, 'there is talk of a testimonial to this man. I will not give one shilling. I have no idea of raising statues to fellows who take away club paper. No, by George, I have not. Why, they will be raising statues to men who take club spoons next! Not one penny of *my* money shall they have!'"

And now, if you please, we will tell the real story which has furnished this scandal to a newspaper, this tattle to club gossips and loungers. The field-marshal, wishing to make a further provision for a friend, informed his lawyer what he desired to do. The lawyer, a member of the Athenæum Club, there wrote the draft of such a codicil as he would advise, and sent the paper by the post to Lord Clyde at Chatham. Lord Clyde, finding the paper perfectly satisfactory, signed it and sent it back: and hence we have the story of "the codicil bearing the signature of Clyde, F.M., and written, strange to say, upon paper bearing the Athenæum Club mark."

Here I have been imagining a dialogue between a half-dozen gossips such as congregate round a club fire-place of an afternoon. I wonder how many people besides—whether any chance reader of this very page, has read and believed this story about the good old lord? Have the country papers copied the anecdote, and our "own correspondents" made their remarks on it? If, my good sir, or madam, you have read it and credited it, don't you own to a little feeling of shame and sorrow, now that the trumpery little mystery is cleared? To "the new inhabitant of light," passed away and out of reach of our censure, misrepresentation, scandal, dulness, malice, a silly falsehood matters nothing. Censure and praise are alike to him—"the music warbling to the deafened ear, the incense wasted on the funeral bier," the pompous eulogy pronounced over the gravestone, or the lie that slander spits on it. Faithfully though this brave old chief did his duty, honest and upright though his life was, glorious his renown—you see he could write at Chatham on London paper; you see men can be found to point out how "strange" his behaviour was.

And about ourselves? My good people, do you by chance know any man or woman who has formed unjust conclusions regarding his neighbour? Have you ever found yourself willing, nay, eager to believe evil of some man whom you hate? Whom you hate because he is successful, and you are not: because he is rich, and you are poor: because he dines with great men who don't invite you: because he wears a silk gown, and yours is still stuff: because he has been called in to perform the operation

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though you lived close by: because his pictures have been bought, and yours returned home unsold: because he fills his church, and you are preaching to empty pews? If your rival prospers, have you ever felt a twinge of anger? If his wife's carriage passes you and Mrs. Tomkins, who are in a cab, don't you feel that those people are giving themselves absurd airs of importance? If he lives with great people, are you not sure he is a sneak? And if you ever felt envy towards another, and if your heart has ever been black towards your brother, if you have been peevish at his success, pleased to hear his merit depreciated, and eager to believe all that is said in his disfavour—my good sir, as you yourself contritely own that you are unjust, jealous, uncharitable, so you may be sure, some men are uncharitable, jealous, and unjust regarding *you*.

The proofs and manuscript of this little sermon have just come from the printer's, and as I look at the writing, I perceive, not without a smile, that one or two of the pages bear, "strange to say," the mark of a club of which I have the honour to be a member. Those lines quoted in a foregoing page are from some noble verses written by one of Mr. Addison's men, Mr. Tickell, on the death of Cadogan, who was amongst the most prominent "of Marlborough's captains and Eugenio's friends." If you are acquainted with the history of those times, you have read how Cadogan had his feuds and hatreds too, as Tickell's patron had his, as Cadogan's great chief had his. "The Duke of Marlborough's character has been so variously drawn" (writes a famous contemporary of the duke's), "that it is hard to pronounce on either side without the suspicion of flattery or detraction. I shall say nothing of his military accomplishments, which the opposite reports of his friends and enemies among the soldiers have rendered problematical. Those maligners who deny him personal valour, seem not to consider that this accusation is charged at a venture, since the person of a general is too seldom exposed, and that fear which is said sometimes to have disconcerted him before action might probably be more for his army than himself." If Swift could hint a doubt of Marlborough's courage, what wonder that a nameless scribe of our day should question the honour of Clyde?

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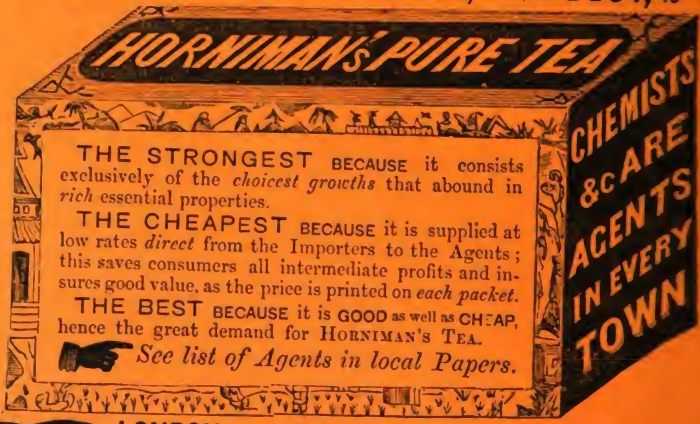

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"WHY, ON EARTH, ON SUNDAY?"

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THE

CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

DECEMBER, 1863.

The Small House at Allington.

CHAPTER XLVI.

John Eames at his Office.

MR. CROSBIE and his wife went upon their honeymoon tour to Folkestone in the middle of February, and returned to London about the end of March. Nothing of special moment to the interests of our story occurred during those six weeks, unless the proceedings of the young married couple by the sea-side may be thought to have any special interest. With regard to those proceedings I can only say that Crosbie was very glad when they were brought to a close. All holiday-making is hard work, but holiday-making with nothing to do is the hardest work of all. At the end of March they went into their new house, and we will hope that Lady Alexandrina did not find it very cold.

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During this time Lily's recovery from her illness was being completed. She had no relapse, nor did anything occur to create a new fear on her account. But, nevertheless, Dr. Crofts gave it as his opinion that it would be inexpedient to move her into a fresh house at Lady-day. March is not a kindly month for invalids; and therefore with some regret on the part of Mrs. Dale, with much impatience on that of Bell, and with considerable outspoken remonstrance from Lily herself, the squire was requested to let them remain through the month of April. How the squire received this request, and in what way he assented to the doctor's reasoning, will be told in the course of a chapter or two.

In the meantime John Eames had continued his career in London without much immediate satisfaction to himself, or to the lady who boasted to be his heart's chosen queen. Miss Amelia Roper, indeed, was becoming very cross, and in her ill temper was playing a game that was tending to create a frightful amount of hot water in Burton Crescent. She was devoting herself to a flirtation with Mr. Cradell, not only under the immediate eyes of Johnny Eames, but also under those of Mrs. Lupex. John Eames, the blockhead, did not like it. He was above all things anxious to get rid of Amelia and her claims; so anxious, that on certain moody occasions he would threaten himself with diverse tragical terminations to his career in London. He would enlist. He would go to Australia. He would blow out his brains. He would have "an explanation" with Amelia, tell her that she was a vixen, and proclaim his hatred. He would rush down to Allington and throw himself in despair at Lily's feet. Amelia was the bugbear of his life. Nevertheless, when she flirted with Cradell, he did not like it, and was ass enough to speak to Cradell about it.

"Of course I don't care," he said, "only it seems to me that you are making a fool of yourself."

"I thought you wanted to get rid of her."

"She's nothing on earth to me; only it does, you know——"

"Does do what?" asked Cradell.

"Why, if I was to be fal-lalling with that married woman, you wouldn't like it. That's all about it. Do you mean to marry her?"

"What!—Amelia?"

"Yes; Amelia."

"Not if I know it."

"Then if I were you I would leave her alone. She's only making a fool of you."

Eames' advice may have been good, and the view taken by him of Amelia's proceedings may have been correct; but as regarded his own part in the affair, he was not wise. Miss Roper, no doubt, wished to make him jealous;—and she succeeded in the teeth of his aversion to her and of his love elsewhere. He had no desire to say soft things to Miss Roper. Miss Roper, with all her skill, could not extract a word pleasantly soft from him once a week. But, nevertheless, soft words to

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her and from her in another quarter made him uneasy. Such being the case, must we not acknowledge that John Eames was still floundering in the ignorance of his hobbledehoyhood?

The Lupexes at this time still held their ground in the Crescent, although repeated warnings to go had been given them. Mrs. Roper, though she constantly spoke of sacrificing all that they owed her, still hankered, with a natural hankering, after her money. And as each warning was accompanied by a demand for payment, and usually produced some slight subsidy on account, the thing went on from week to week; and at the beginning of April Mr. and Mrs. Lupex were still boarders at Mrs. Roper's house.

Eames had heard nothing from Allington since the time of his Christmas visit, and his subsequent correspondence with Lord De Guest. In his letters from his mother he was told that game came frequently from Guestwick Manor, and in this way he knew that he was not forgotten by the earl. But of Lily he had heard not a word,—except, indeed, the rumour, which had now become general, that the Dales from the Small House were about to move themselves into Guestwick. When first he learned this he construed the tidings as favourable to himself, thinking that Lily, removed from the grandeur of Allington, might possibly be more easily within his reach; but, latterly, he had given up any such hope as that, and was telling himself that his friend at the Manor had abandoned all idea of making up the marriage. Three months had already elapsed since his visit. Five months had passed since Crosbie had surrendered his claim. Surely such a knave as Crosbie might be forgotten in five months! If any steps could have been taken through the squire, surely three months would have sufficed for them! It was very manifest to him that there was no ground of hope for him at Allington, and it would certainly be well for him to go off to Australia. He would go to Australia, but he would thrash Cradell first for having dared to interfere with Amelia Roper. That, generally, was the state of his mind during the first week in April.

Then there came to him a letter from the earl which instantly effected a great change in all his feelings; which taught him to regard Australia as a dream, and almost put him into a good humour with Cradell. The earl had by no means lost sight of his friend's interests at Allington; and, moreover, those interests were now backed by an ally who in this matter must be regarded as much more powerful than the earl. The squire had given in his consent to the Eames alliance.

The earl's letter was as follows:—

My dear John, *Guestwick Manor, April* 7, 18—

I told you to write to me again, and you haven't done it. I saw your mother the other day, or else you might have been dead for anything I knew. A young man always ought to write letters when he is told to do so. [Eames, when he had got so far, felt himself rather aggrieved by this rebuke, knowing that he had abstained from writing to his patron simply from an unwillingness to intrude upon him with his letters. "By Jove, I'll write to him every week of his life, till he's sick

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of me," Johnny said to himself when he found himself thus instructed as to a young man's duties.]

And now I have got to tell you a long story, and I should like it much better if you were down here, so that I might save myself the trouble; but you would think me ill-natured if I were to keep you waiting. I happened to meet Mr. Dale the other day, and he said that he should be very glad if a certain young lady would make up her mind to listen to a certain young friend of mine. So I asked him what he meant to do about the young lady's fortune, and he declared himself willing to give her a hundred a year during his life, and to settle four thousand pounds upon her after his death. I said that I would do as much on my part by the young man; but as two hundred a year, with your salary, would hardly give you enough to begin with, I'll make mine a hundred and fifty. You'll be getting up in your office soon, and with five hundred a year you ought to be able to get along; especially as you need not insure your life. I should live somewhere near Bloomsbury Square at first, because I'm told you can get a house for nothing. After all, what's fashion worth? You can bring your wife down here in the autumn, and have some shooting. She won't let you go to sleep under the trees, I'll be bound.

But you must look after the young lady. You will understand that no one has said a word to her about it; or, if they have, I don't know it. You'll find the squire on your side, that's all. Couldn't you manage to come down this Easter? Tell old Buffle, with my compliments, that I want you. I'll write to him if you like it. I did know him at one time, though I can't say I was ever very fond of him. It stands to reason that you can't get on with Miss Lily without seeing her; unless, indeed, you like better to write to her, which always seems to me to be very poor sort of fun. You'd much better come down, and go a-wooing in the regular old-fashioned way. I need not tell you that Lady Julia will be delighted to see you. You are a prime favourite with her since that affair at the railway station. She thinks a great deal more about that than she does about the bull.

Now, my dear fellow, you know all about it, and I shall take it very much amiss of you if you don't answer my letter soon.—Your very sincere friend,

De Guest.

When Eames had finished this letter, sitting at his office-desk, his surprise and elation were so great that he hardly knew where he was or what he ought to do. Could it be the truth that Lily's uncle had not only consented that the match should be made, but that he had also promised to give his niece a considerable fortune? For a few minutes it seemed to Johnny as though all obstacles to his happiness were removed, and that there was no impediment between him and an amount of bliss of which he had hitherto hardly dared to dream. Then, when he considered the earl's munificence, he almost cried. He found that he could not compose his mind to think, or even his hand to write. He did not know whether it would be right in him to accept such pecuniary liberality from any living man, and almost thought that he should feel himself bound to reject the earl's offer. As to the squire's money, that he knew he might accept. All that comes in the shape of a young woman's fortune may be taken by any man.

He would certainly answer the earl's letter, and that at once. He would not leave the office till he had done so. His friend should have cause to bring no further charge against him of that kind. And then again he reverted to the injustice which had been done to him in the matter of letter-writing,—as if that consideration were of moment in such

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a state of circumstances as was now existing. But at last his thoughts brought themselves to the real question at issue. Would Lily Dale accept him? After all, the realization of his good fortune depended altogether upon her feelings; and, as he remembered this, his mind misgave him sorely. It was filled not only with a young lover's ordinary doubts, —with the fear and trembling incidental to the bashfulness of hobbledehoyhood,—but with an idea that that affair with Crosbie would still stand in his way. He did not, perhaps, rightly understand all that Lily had suffered, but he conceived it to be probable that there had been wounds which even the last five months might not yet have cured. Could it be that she would allow him to cure these wounds? As he thought of this he felt almost crushed to the earth by an indomitable bashfulness and conviction of his own unworthiness. What had he to offer worthy of the acceptance of such a girl as Lilian Dale?

I fear that the Crown did not get out of John Eames an adequate return for his salary on that day. So adequate, however, had been the return given by him for some time past, that promotion was supposed throughout the Income-tax Office to be coming in his way, much to the jealousy of Cradell, Fisher, and others, his immediate compeers and cronies. And the place assigned to him by rumour was one which was generally regarded as a perfect Elysium upon earth in the Civil Service world. He was, so rumour said, to become private secretary to the First Commissioner. He would be removed by such a change as this from the large uncarpeted room in which he at present sat; occupying the same desk with another man to whom he had felt himself to be ignominiously bound, as dogs must feel when they are coupled. This room had been the bear-garden of the office. Twelve or fourteen men sat in it. Large pewter pots were brought into it daily at one o'clock, giving it an air that was not aristocratic. The senior of the room, one Mr. Love, who was presumed to have it under his immediate dominion, was a clerk of the ancient stamp, dull, heavy, unambitious, living out on the farther side of Islington, and unknown beyond the limits of his office to any of his younger brethren. He was generally regarded as having given a bad tone to the room. And then the clerks in this room would not unfrequently be blown up,—with very palpable blowings up,—by an official swell, a certain chief clerk, named Kissing, much higher in standing though younger in age than the gentleman of whom we have before spoken. He would hurry in, out of his own neighbouring chamber, with quick step and nose in the air, shuffling in his office slippers, looking on each occasion as though there were some cause to fear that the whole Civil Service were coming to an abrupt termination, and would lay about him with hard words, which some of those in the big room did not find it very easy to bear. His hair was always brushed straight up, his eyes were always very wide open,—and he usually carried a big letter-book with him, keeping in it a certain place with his finger. This book was almost too much for his strength, and he would flop it down, now on

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this man's desk and now on that man's, and in a long career of such floppings had made himself to be very much hated. On the score of some old grudge he and Mr. Love did not speak to each other; and for this reason, on all occasions of fault-finding, the blown-up young man would refer Mr. Kissing to his enemy.

"I know nothing about it," Mr. Love would say, not lifting his face from his desk for a moment.

"I shall certainly lay the matter before the Board," Mr. Kissing would reply, and would then shuffle out of the room with the big book.

Sometimes Mr. Kissing would lay the matter before the Board, and then he, and Mr. Love, and two or three delinquent clerks would be summoned thither. It seldom led to much. The delinquent clerks would be cautioned. One Commissioner would say a word in private to Mr. Love, and another a word in private to Mr. Kissing. Then, when left alone, the Commissioners would have their little jokes, saying that Kissing, they feared, went by favour; and that Love should still be lord of all. But these things were done in the mild days, before Sir Raffle Buffle came to the Board.

There had been some fun in this at first; but of late John Eames had become tired of it. He disliked Mr. Kissing, and the big book out of which Mr. Kissing was always endeavouring to convict him of some official sin, and had got tired of that joke of setting Kissing and Love by the ears together. When the Assistant Secretary first suggested to him that Sir Raffle had an idea of selecting him as private secretary, and when he remembered the cosy little room, all carpeted, with a leathern arm-chair and a separate washing-stand, which in such case would be devoted to his use, and remembered also that he would be put into receipt of an additional hundred a year, and would stand in the way of still better promotion, he was overjoyed. But there were certain drawbacks. The present private secretary,—who had been private secretary also to the late First Commissioner,—was giving up his Elysium because he could not endure the tones of Sir Raffle's voice. It was understood that Sir Raffle required rather more of a private secretary, in the way of obsequious attendance, than was desirable, and Eames almost doubted his own fitness for the place.

"And why should he choose me?" he had asked the Assistant Secretary.

"Well, we have talked it over together, and I think that he prefers you to any other that has been named."

"But he was so very hard upon me about the affair at the railway station."

"I think he has heard more about that since; I think that some message has reached him from your friend, Earl De Guest."

"Oh, indeed!" said Johnny, beginning to comprehend what it was to have an earl for his friend. Since his acquaintance with the nobleman had commenced he had studiously avoided all mention of the earl's name at his office; and yet he received almost daily intimation that the fact was well known there, and not a little considered.

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"But he is so very rough," said Johnny.

"You can put up with that," said his friend the Assistant Secretary. "His bark is worse than his bite, as you know; and then a hundred a year is worth having." Eames was at that moment inclined to take a gloomy view of life in general, and was disposed to refuse the place, should it be offered to him. He had not then received the earl's letter; but now, as he sat with that letter open before him, lying in the drawer beneath his desk so that he could still read it as he leaned back in his chair, he was enabled to look at things in general through a different atmosphere. In the first place, Lilian Dale's husband ought to have a room to himself, with a carpet and an arm-chair; and then that additional hundred a year would raise his income at once to the sum as to which the earl had made some sort of stipulation. But could he get that leave of absence at Easter? If he consented to be Sir Raffle's private secretary, he would make that a part of the bargain.

At this moment the door of the big room was opened, and Mr. Kissing shuffled in with very quick little steps. He shuffled in, and coming direct up to John's desk, flopped his ledger down upon it before its owner had had time to close the drawer which contained the precious letter.

"What have you got in that drawer, Mr. Eames?"

"A private letter, Mr. Kissing."

"Oh;—a private letter!" said Mr. Kissing, feeling strongly convinced there was a novel hidden there, but not daring to express his belief. "I have been half the morning, Mr. Eames, looking for this letter to the Admiralty, and you've put it under S!" A bystander listening to Mr. Kissing's tone would have been led to believe that the whole Income-tax Office was jeopardized by the terrible iniquity thus disclosed.

"Somerset House," pleaded Johnny.

"Psha;—Somerset House! Half the offices in London——"

"You'd better ask Mr. Love," said Eames. "It's all done under his special instructions." Mr. Kissing looked at Mr. Love, and Mr. Love looked steadfastly at his desk. "Mr. Love knows all about the indexing," continued Johnny. "He's index master general to the department."

"No, I'm not, Mr. Eames," said Mr. Love, who rather liked John Eames, and hated Mr. Kissing with his whole heart. "But I believe the indexes, on the whole, are very well done in this room. Some people don't know how to find letters."

"Mr. Eames," began Mr. Kissing, still pointing with a finger of bitter reproach to the misused S, and beginning an oration which was intended for the benefit of the whole room, and for the annihilation of old Mr. Love, "if you have yet to learn that the word Admiralty begins with A and not with S, you have much to learn which should have been acquired before you first came into this office. Somerset House is not a department." Then he turned round to the room at large, and repeated the last words, as though they might become very useful if taken well to

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heart——"Is not a department. The Treasury is a department; the Home Office is a department; the India Board is a department—"

"No, Mr. Kissing, it isn't," said a young clerk from the other end of the room.

"You know very well what I mean, sir. The India Office is a department."

"There's no Board, sir."

"Never mind; but how any gentleman who has been in the service three months,—not to say three years,—can suppose Somerset House to be a department, is beyond my comprehension. If you have been improperly instructed——"

"We shall know all about it another time," said Eames. "Mr. Love will make a memorandum of it."

"I shan't do anything of the kind," said Mr. Love.

"If you have been wrongly instructed,—" Mr. Kissing began again, stealing a glance at Mr. Love as he did so; but at this moment the door was again opened, and a messenger summoned Johnny to the presence of the really great man. "Mr. Eames, to wait upon Sir Raffle." Upon hearing this Johnny immediately started, and left Mr. Kissing and the big book in possession of his desk. How the battle was waged, and how it raged in the large room, we cannot stop to hear, as it is necessary that we should follow our hero into the presence of Sir Raffle Buffle.

"Ah, Eames,—yes," said Sir Raffle, looking up from his desk when the young man entered; "just wait half a minute, will you?" And the knight went to work at his papers, as though fearing that any delay in what he was doing might be very prejudicial to the nation at large. "Ah, Eames,—well,—yes," he said again, as he pushed away from him, almost with a jerk, the papers on which he had been writing. "They tell me that you know the business of this office pretty well."

"Some of it, sir," said Eames.

"Well, yes; some of it. But you'll have to understand the whole of it if you come to me. And you must be very sharp about it too. You know that FitzHoward is leaving me?"

"I have heard of it, sir."

"A very excellent young man, though perhaps not—— But we won't mind that. The work is a little too much for him, and he's going back into the office. I believe Lord De Guest is a friend of yours; isn't he?

"Yes; he is a friend of mine, certainly. He's been very kind to me."

"Ah, well. I've known the earl for many years,—for very many years; and intimately at one time. Perhaps you may have heard him mention my name?"

"Yes, I have, Sir Raffle."

"We were intimate once, but those things go off, you know. He's been the country mouse and I've been the town mouse. Ha, ha, ha! You may tell him that I say so. He won't mind that coming from me."

"Oh, no; not at all," said Eames.

"Mind you tell him when you see him. The earl is a man for whom

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I've always had a great respect,—a very great respect,—I may say regard. And now, Eames, what do you say to taking FitzHoward's place? The work is hard. It is fair that I should tell you that. The work will, no doubt, be very hard. I take a greater share of what's going than my predecessors have done; and I don't mind telling you that I have been sent here, because a man was wanted who would do that." The voice of Sir Raffle, as he continued, became more and more harsh, and Eames began to think how wise FitzHoward had been. "I mean to do my duty, and I shall expect that my private secretary will do his. But, Mr. Eames, I never forget a man. Whether he be good or bad, I never forget a man. You don't dislike late hours, I suppose."

"Coming late to the office, you mean? Oh, no, not in the least."

"Staying late,—staying late. Six or seven o'clock if necessary,—putting your shoulder to the wheel when the coach gets into the mud. That's what I've been doing all my life. They've known what I am very well. They've always kept me for the heavy roads. If they paid, in the Civil Service, by the hour, I believe I should have drawn a larger income than any man in it. If you take the vacant chair in the next room you'll find it's no joke. It's only fair that I should tell you that."

"I can work as hard as any man," said Eames.

"That's right. That's right. Stick to that and I'll stick to you. It will be a great gratification to me to have by me a friend of my old friend De Guest. Tell him I say so. And now you may as well get into harness at once. FitzHoward is there. You can go in to him, and at half-past four exactly I'll see you both. I'm very exact, mind,—very;—and therefore you must be exact." Then Sir Raffle looked as though he desired to be left alone.

"Sir Raffle, there's one favour I want to ask of you," said Johnny.

"And what's that?"

"I am most anxious to be absent for a fortnight or three weeks, just at Easter. I shall want to go in about ten days."

"Absent for three weeks at Easter, when the parliamentary work is beginning! That won't do for a private secretary."

"But it's very important, Sir Raffle."

"Out of the question, Eames; quite out of the question."

"It's almost life and death to me."

"Almost life and death. Why, what are you going to do?" With all his grandeur and national importance, Sir Raffle would be very curious as to little people.

"Well, I can't exactly tell you, and I'm not quite sure myself."

"Then don't talk nonsense. It's impossible that I should spare my private secretary just at that time of the year. I couldn't do it. The service won't admit of it. You're not entitled to leave at that season. Private secretaries always take their leave in the autumn."

"I should like to be absent in the autumn too, but——"

"It's out of the question, Mr. Eames."

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Then John Eames reflected that it behoved him in such an emergency to fire off his big gun. He had a great dislike to firing this big gun, but, as he said to himself, there are occasions which make a big gun very necessary. "I got a letter from Lord De Guest this morning, pressing me very much to go to him at Easter. It's about business," added Johnny. "If there was any difficulty, he said, he should write to you."

"Write to me," said Sir Raffle, who did not like to be approached too familiarly in his office, even by an earl.

"Of course I shouldn't tell him to do that. But, Sir Raffle, if I remained out there, in the office," and Johnny pointed towards the big room with his head, "I could choose April for my month. And as the matter is so important to me, and to the earl—"

"What can it be?" said Sir Raffle.

"It's quite private," said John Eames.

Hereupon Sir Raffle became very petulant, feeling that a bargain was being made with him. This young man would only consent to become his private secretary upon certain terms! "Well; go in to FitzHoward now. I can't lose all my day in this way."

"But I shall be able to get away at Easter?"

"I don't know. We shall see about it. But don't stand talking there now." Then John Eames went into FitzHoward's room and received that gentleman's congratulations on his appointment. "I hope you like being rung for, like a servant, every minute, for he's always ringing that bell. And he'll roar at you till you're deaf. You must give up all dinner engagements, for though there is not much to do, he'll never let you go. I don't think anybody ever asks him out to dinner, for he likes being here till seven. And you'll have to write all manner of lies about big people. And, sometimes, when he has sent Rafferty out about his private business, he'll ask you to bring him his shoes." Now Rafferty was the First Commissioner's messenger.

It must be remembered, however, that this little account was given by an outgoing and discomfited private secretary. "A man is not asked to bring another man his shoes," said Eames to himself, "until he shows himself fit for that sort of business." Then he made within his own breast a little resolution about Sir Raffle's shoes.

CHAPTER XLVII.

The new Private Secretary.

My dear Lord De Guest. *Income-Tax Office, April* 8, 18—

I hardly know how to answer your letter, it is so very kind,—more than kind. And about not writing before. I must explain that I have not liked to trouble you with letters. I should have seemed to be encroaching if I had written much. Indeed it didn't come from not thinking about you. And first of all, about the

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money,—as to your offer, I mean. I really feel that I do not know what I ought to say to you about it, without appearing to be a simpleton. The truth is, I don't know what I ought to do, and can only trust to you not to put me wrong. I have an idea that a man ought not to accept a present of money, unless from his father, or somebody like that. And the sum you mention is so very large that it makes me wish you had not named it. If you choose to be so generous, would it not be better that you should leave it me in your will?

"So that he might always want me to be dying," said Lord De Guest, as he read the letter out loud to his sister.

"I'm sure he wouldn't want that," said Lady Julia. "But you may live for twenty-five years, you know."

"Say fifty," said the earl. And then he continued the reading of his letter.

But all that depends so much upon another person, that it is hardly worth while talking about it. Of course I am very much obliged to Mr. Dale,—very much indeed,—and I think that he is behaving very handsomely to his niece. But whether it will do me any good, that is quite another thing. However, I shall certainly accept your kind invitation for Easter, and find out whether I have a chance or not. I must tell you that Sir Raffle Buffle has made me his private secretary, by which I get a hundred a year. He says he was a great crony of yours many years ago, and seems to like talking about you very much. You will understand what all that means. He has sent you ever so many messages, but I don't suppose you will care to get them. I am to go to him to-morrow, and from all I hear I shall have a hard time of it.

"By George, he will," said the earl. "Poor fellow!"

"But I thought a private secretary never had anything to do," said Lady Julia.

"I shouldn't like to be private secretary to Sir Raffle, myself. But he's young, and a hundred a year is a great thing. How we all of us used to hate that man. His voice sounded like a bell with a crack in it. We always used to be asking for some one to muffle the Buffle. They call him Huffle Scuffle at his office. Poor Johnny!" Then he finished the letter:—

I told him that I must have leave of absence at Easter, and he at first declared that it was impossible. But I shall carry my point about that. I would not stay away to be made private secretary to the Prime Minister; and yet I almost feel that I might as well stay away for any good that I shall do.

Give my kind regards to Lady Julia, and tell her how very much obliged to her I am. I cannot express the gratitude which I owe to you. But pray believe me, my dear Lord De Guest, always very faithfully yours,

JOHN EAMES.

It was late before Eames had finished his letter. He had been making himself ready for his exodus from the big room, and preparing his desk and papers for his successor. About half-past five Cradell came up to him, and suggested that they should walk home together.

"What! you here still?" said Eames. "I thought you always went at four." Cradell had remained, hanging about the office, in order that he might walk home with the new private secretary. But Eames did not

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desire this. He had much of which he desired to think alone, and would fain have been allowed to walk by himself.

"Yes; I had things to do. I say, Johnny, I congratulate you most heartily; I do, indeed."

"Thank you, old fellow!"

"It is such a grand thing, you know. A hundred a year all at once! And then such a snug room to yourself,—and that fellow, Kissing, never can come near you. He has been making himself such a beast all day. But, Johnny, I always knew you'd come to something more than common. I always said so."

"There's nothing uncommon about this; except that Fitz says that old Huffle Scuffle makes himself uncommon nasty."

"Never mind what Fitz says. It's all jealousy. You'll have it all your own way, if you look sharp. I think you always do have it all your own way. Are you nearly ready?"

"Well,—not quite. Don't wait for me, Caudle."

"Oh, I'll wait. I don't mind waiting. They'll keep dinner for us if we both stay. Besides, what matters? I'd do more than that for you."

"I have some idea of working on till eight, and having a chop sent in," said Johnny. "Besides—I've got somewhere to call, by myself."

Then Cradell almost cried. He remained silent for two or three minutes, striving to master his emotion; and at last, when he did speak, had hardly succeeded in doing so. "Oh, Johnny," he said, "I know what that means. You are going to throw me over because you are getting up in the world. I have always stuck to you, through everything; haven't I?"

"Don't make yourself a fool, Caudle."

"Well; so I have. And if they had made me private secretary, I should have been just the same to you as ever. You'd have found no change in me."

"What a goose you are. Do you say I'm changed, because I want to dine in the city?"

"It's all because you don't want to walk home with me, as we used to do. I'm not such a goose but what I can see. But, Johnny—— I suppose I mustn't call you Johnny, now."

"Don't be such a—con—founded——" Then Eames got up, and walked about the room. "Come along," said he, "I don't care about staying, and don't mind where I dine." And he bustled away with his hat and gloves, hardly giving Cradell time to catch him before he got out into the streets. "I tell you what it is, Caudle," said he, "all that kind of thing is disgusting."

"But how would you feel," whimpered Cradell, who had never succeeded in putting himself quite on a par with his friend, even in his own estimation, since that glorious victory at the railway station. If he could only have thrashed Lupex as Johnny had thrashed Crosbie; then indeed they might have been equal,—a pair of heroes. But he had not

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done so. He had never told himself that he was a coward, but he considered that circumstances had been specially unkind to him. "But how would you feel," he whimpered, "if the friend whom you liked better than anybody else in the world, turned his back upon you?"

"I haven't turned my back upon you; except that I can't get you to walk fast enough. Come along, old fellow, and don't talk confounded nonsense. I hate all that kind of thing. You never ought to suppose that a man will give himself airs, but wait till he does. I don't believe I shall remain with old Scuffles above a month or two. From all that I can hear that's as much as any one can bear."

Then Cradell by degrees became happy and cordial, and during the whole walk flattered Eames with all the flattery of which he was master. And Johnny, though he did profess himself to be averse to "all that kind of thing," was nevertheless open to flattery. When Cradell told him that though FitzHoward could not manage the Tartar knight, he might probably do so; he was inclined to believe what Cradell said. "And as to getting him his shoes," said Cradell, "I don't suppose he'd ever think of asking you to do such a thing, unless he was in a very great hurry, or something of that kind."

"Look here, Johnny," said Cradell, as they got into one of the streets bordering on Burton Crescent, "you know the last thing in the world I should like to do would be to offend you."

"All right, Caudle," said Eames, going on, whereas his companion had shown a tendency towards stopping.

"Look here, now; if I have vexed you about Amelia Roper, I'll make you a promise never to speak to her again."

"D—— Amelia Roper," said Eames, suddenly stopping himself and stopping Cradell as well. The exclamation was made in a deep angry voice which attracted the notice of one or two who were passing. Johnny was very wrong,—wrong to utter any curse;—very wrong to ejaculate that curse against a human being; and especially wrong to fulminate it against a woman, a woman whom he had professed to love! But he did do so, and I cannot tell my story thoroughly without repeating the wicked word.

Cradell looked up at him and stared. "I only meant to say," said Cradell, "I'll do anything you like in the matter."

"Then never mention her name to me again. And as to talking to her, you may talk to her till you're both blue in the face, if you please."

"Oh;—I didn't know. You didn't seem to like it the other day."

"I was a fool the other day,—a confounded fool. And so I have been all my life. Amelia Roper! Look here, Caudle; if she makes up to you this evening, as I've no doubt she will, for she seems to be playing that game constantly now, just let her have her fling. Never mind me; I'll amuse myself with Mrs. Lupex, or Miss Spruce."

"But there'll be the deuce to pay with Mrs. Lupex. She's as cross as possible already whenever Amelia speaks to me. You don't know

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what a jealous woman is, Johnny." Cradell had got upon what he considered to be his high ground. And on that he felt himself equal to any man. It was no doubt true that Eames had thrashed a man, and that he had not; it was true also that Eames had risen to very high place in the social world, having become a private secretary; but for a dangerous, mysterious, overwhelming, life-enveloping intrigue;—was not he the acknowledged hero of such an affair? He had paid very dearly, both in pocket and in comfort, for the blessing of Mrs. Lupex's society; but he hardly considered that he had paid too dearly. There are certain luxuries which a man will find to be expensive; but, for all that, they may be worth their price. Nevertheless as he went up the steps of Mrs. Roper's house he made up his mind that he would oblige his friend. The intrigue might in that way become more mysterious, and more life-enveloping; whereas it would not become more dangerous, seeing that Mr. Lupex could hardly find himself to be aggrieved by such a proceeding.

The whole number of Mrs. Roper's boarders were assembled at dinner that day. Mr. Lupex seldom joined that festive board, but on this occasion he was present, appearing from his voice and manner to be in high good-humour. Cradell had communicated to the company in the drawing-room the great good fortune which had fallen upon his friend, and Johnny had thereby become the mark of a certain amount of hero-worship.

"Oh, indeed!" said Mrs. Roper. "An 'appy woman your mother will be when she hears it. But I always said you'd come down right side uppermost."

"Handsome is as handsome does," said Miss Spruce.

"Oh, Mr. Eames!" exclaimed Mrs. Lupex, with graceful enthusiasm, "I wish you joy from the very depth of my heart. It is such an elegant appointment."

"Accept the hand of a true and disinterested friend," said Lupex. And Johnny did accept the hand, though it was very dirty and stained all over with paint.

Amelia stood apart and conveyed her congratulations by a glance,—or, I might better say, by a series of glances. "And now,—now will you not be mine," the glances said; "now that you are rolling in wealth and prosperity?" And then before they went downstairs she did whisper one word to him. "Oh, I am so happy, John;—so very happy."

"Bother!" said Johnny, in a tone quite loud enough to reach the lady's ear. Then making his way round the room, he gave his arm to Miss Spruce. Amelia, as she walked downstairs alone, declared to herself that she would wring his heart. She had been employed in wringing it for some days past, and had been astonished at her own success. It had been clear enough to her that Eames had been piqued by her overtures to Cradell, and she resolved therefore to play out that game.

"Oh, Mr. Cradell," she said, as she took her seat next to him. "The

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friends I like are the friends that remain always the same. I hate your sudden rises. They do so often make a man upsetting."

"I should like to try, myself, all the same," said Cradell.

"Well, I don't think it would make any difference in you; I don't indeed. And of course your time will come too. It's that earl as has done it,—he that was worried by the bull. Since we have known an earl we have been so mighty fine." And Amelia gave her head a little toss, and then smiled archly, in a manner which, to Cradell's eyes, was really very becoming. But he saw that Mrs. Lupex was looking at him from the other side of the table, and he could not quite enjoy the goods which the gods had provided for him.

When the ladies left the dining-room Lupex and the two young men drew their chairs near the fire, and each prepared for himself a moderate potation. Eames made a little attempt at leaving the room, but he was implored by Lupex with such earnest protestation of friendship to remain, and was so weakly fearful of being charged with giving himself airs, that he did as he was desired.

"And here, Mr. Eames, is to your very good health," said Lupex, raising to his mouth a steaming goblet of gin-and-water, "and wishing you many years to enjoy your official prosperity."

"Thank ye," said Eames. "I don't know much about the prosperity, but I'm just as much obliged."

"Yes, sir; when I see a young man of your age beginning to rise in the world, I know he'll go on. Now look at me, Mr. Eames. Mr. Cradell, here's your very good health, and may all unkindness be drowned in the flowing bowl—— Look at me, Mr. Eames. I've never risen in the world; I've never done any good in the world, and never shall."

"Oh, Mr. Lupex, don't say that."

"Ah, but I do say it. I've always been pulling the devil by the tail, and never yet got as much as a good hold on to that. And I'll tell you why; I never got a chance when I was young. If I could have got any big fellow, a star, you know, to let me paint his portrait when I was your age,—such a one, let us say, as your friend Sir Raffle——"

"What a star!" said Cradell.

"Well, I suppose he's pretty much known in the world, isn't he? Or Lord Derby, or Mr. Spurgeon. You know what I mean. If I'd got such a chance as that when I was young, I should never have been doing jobs of scene-painting at the minor theatres at so much a square yard. You've got the chance now, but I never had it." Whereupon Mr. Lupex finished his first measure of gin-and-water.

"It's a very queer thing,—life is," continued Lupex; and, though he did not at once go to work boldly at the mixing of another glass of toddy, he began gradually, and as if by instinct, to finger the things which would be necessary for that operation. "A very queer thing. Now, remember, young gentlemen, I'm not denying that success in life will depend upon good conduct;—of course it does; but, then, how often good conduct

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comes from success? Should I have been what I am now, do you suppose, if some big fellow had taken me by the hand when I was struggling to make an artist of myself? I could have drunk claret and champagne just as well as gin-and-water, and worn ruffles to my shirt as gracefully as many a fellow who used to be very fond of me, and now won't speak to me if he meets me in the streets. I never got a chance,—never."

"But it's not too late yet, Mr. Lupex," said Eames.

"Yes, it is, Eames,—yes, it is." And now Mr. Lupex had grasped the gin-bottle. "It's too late now. The game's over, and the match is lost. The talent is here. I'm as sure of that now as ever I was. I've never doubted my own ability,—never for a moment. There are men this very day making a thousand a year off their easels who haven't so good and true an eye in drawing as I have, or so good a feeling in colours. I could name them; only I won't."

"And why shouldn't you try again?" said Eames.

"If I were to paint the finest piece that ever delighted the eye of man, who would come and look at it? Who would have enough belief in me to come as far as this place and see if it were true? No, Eames; I know my own position and my own ways, and I know my own weakness. I couldn't do a day's work now unless I were certain of getting a certain number of shillings at the end of it. That's what a man comes to when things have gone against him."

"But I thought men got lots of money by scene-painting?"

"I don't know what you may call lots, Mr. Cradell; I don't call it lots. But I'm not complaining. I know who I have to thank; and if ever I blow my own brains out I shan't be putting the blame on the wrong shoulders. If you'll take my advice,"—and now he turned round to Eames,—"you'll beware of marrying too soon in life."

"I think a man should marry early, if he marries well," said Eames.

"Don't misunderstand me," continued Lupex. "It isn't about Mrs. L. I'm speaking. I've always regarded my wife as a very fascinating woman."

"Hear, hear, hear!" said Cradell, thumping the table.

"Indeed she is," said Eames.

"And when I caution you against marrying, don't you misunderstand me. I've never said a word against her to any man, and never will. If a man don't stand by his wife, who will he stand by? I blame no one but myself. But I do say this; I never had a chance;—I never had a chance;—never had a chance." And as he repeated the words for the third time, his lips were already fixed to the rim of his tumbler.

At this moment the door of the dining-room was opened, and Mrs. Lupex put in her head.

"Lupex," she said, "what are you doing?"

"Yes, my dear. I can't say I'm doing anything at the present moment. I was giving a little advice to these young gentlemen."

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"Mr. Cradell, I wonder at you. And, Mr. Eames, I wonder at you, too,—in your position! Lupex, come upstairs at once." She then stepped into the room and secured the gin-bottle.

"Oh, Mr. Cradell, do come here," said Amelia, in her liveliest tone, as soon as the men made their appearance above. "I've been waiting for you this half-hour. I've got such a puzzle for you." And she made way for him to a chair which was between herself and the wall. Cradell looked half afraid of his fortunes as he took the proffered seat; but he did take it, and was soon secured from any positive physical attack by the strength and breadth of Miss Roper's crinoline.

"Dear me! Here's a change," said Mrs. Lupex, out loud.

Johnny Eames was standing close, and whispered into her ear, "Changes are so pleasant sometimes! Don't you think so? I do."

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Nemesis.

Crosbie had now settled down to the calm realities of married life, and was beginning to think that the odium was dying away which for a week or two had attached itself to him, partly on account of his usage of Miss Dale, but more strongly in consequence of the thrashing which he had received from John Eames. Not that he had in any way recovered his former tone of life, or that he ever hoped to do so. But he was able to go in and out of his club without embarrassment. He could talk with his wonted voice, and act with his wonted authority at his office. He could tell his friends, with some little degree of pleasure in the sound, that Lady Alexandrina would be very happy to see them. And he could make himself comfortable in his own chair after dinner, with his slippers and his newspaper. He could make himself comfortable,—or at any rate could tell his wife that he did so.

It was very dull. He was obliged to acknowledge to himself, when he thought over the subject, that the life which he was leading was dull. Though he could go into his club without annoyance, nobody there ever thought of asking him to join them at dinner. It was taken for granted that he was going to dine at home; and in the absence of any provocation to the contrary he always did dine at home. He had now been in his house for three weeks and had been asked with his wife to a few bridal dinner-parties, given chiefly by friends of the De Courcy family. Except on such occasions he never passed an evening out of his own house, and had not yet, since his marriage, dined once away from his wife. He told himself that his good conduct in this respect was the result of his own resolution; but, nevertheless, he felt that there was nothing else left for him to do. Nobody asked him to go to the theatre.

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Nobody begged him to drop in of an evening. Men never asked him why he did not play a rubber. He would generally saunter into Sebright's after he left his office, and lounge about the room for half an hour, talking to a few men. Nobody was uncivil to him. But he knew that the whole thing was changed, and he resolved, with some wisdom, to accommodate himself to his altered circumstances.

Lady Alexandrina also found her new life rather dull, and was sometimes inclined to be a little querulous. She would tell her husband that she never got out, and would declare, when he offered to walk with her, that she did not care for walking in the streets. "I don't exactly see, then, where you are to walk," he once replied. She did not tell him that she was fond of riding, and that the Park was a very fitting place for such exercise; but she looked it, and he understood her. "I'll do all I can for her," he said to himself; "but I'll not ruin myself." "Amelia is coming to take me for a drive," she said another time. "Ah, that'll be very nice," he answered. "No; it won't be very nice," said Alexandrina. "Amelia is always shopping and bargaining with the tradespeople. But it will be better than being kept in the house without ever stirring out."

They breakfasted nominally at half-past nine; in truth, it was always nearly ten, as Lady Alexandrina found it difficult to get herself out of her room. At half-past ten punctually he left his house for his office. He usually got home by six, and then spent the greatest part of the hour before dinner in the ceremony of dressing. He went, at least, into his dressing-room, after speaking a few words to his wife, and there remained, pulling things about, clipping his nails, looking over any paper that came in his way, and killing the time. He expected his dinner punctually at seven, and began to feel a little cross if he were kept waiting. After dinner, he drank one glass of wine in company with his wife, and one other by himself, during which latter ceremony he would stare at the hot coals, and think of the thing he had done. Then he would go upstairs and have, first, a cup of coffee, and then a cup of tea. He would read his newspaper, open a book or two, hide his face when he yawned, and try to make believe that he liked it. She had no signs or words of love for him. She never sat on his knee, or caressed him. She never showed him that any happiness had come to her in being allowed to live close to him. They thought that they loved each other;—each thought so; but there was no love, no sympathy, no warmth. The very atmosphere was cold;—so cold that no fire could remove the chill.

In what way would it have been different had Lily Dale sat opposite to him there as his wife, instead of Lady Alexandrina? He told himself frequently that either with one or with the other life would have been the same; that he had made himself for a while unfit for domestic life, and that he must cure himself of that unfitness. But though he declared this to himself in one set of half-spoken thoughts, he would also declare to himself in another set, that Lily would have made the whole house bright with her brightness; that had he brought her home to his hearth,

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there would have been a sun shining on him every morning and every evening. But nevertheless, he strove to do his duty, and remembered that the excitement of official life was still open to him. From eleven in the morning till five in the afternoon he could still hold a position which made it necessary that men should regard him with respect, and speak to him with deference. In this respect he was better off than his wife, for she had no office to which she could betake herself.

"Yes," she said to Amelia, "it is all very nice, and I don't mind the house being damp; but I get so tired of being alone."

"That must be the case with women who are married to men of business."

"Oh, I don't complain. Of course I knew what I was about. I suppose it won't be so very dull when everybody is up in London."

"I don't find the season makes much difference to us after Christmas," said Amelia; "but no doubt London is gayer in May. You'll find you'll like it better next year; and perhaps you'll have a baby, you know."

"Psha!" ejaculated Lady Alexandrina; "I don't want a baby, and don't suppose I shall have one."

"It's always something to do, you know."

Lady Alexandrina, though she was not of an energetic temperament, could not but confess to herself that she had made a mistake. She had been tempted to marry Crosbie because Crosbie was a man of fashion, and now she was told that the London season would make no difference to her; —the London season which had hitherto always brought to her the excitement of parties, if it had not given her the satisfaction of amusement. She had been tempted to marry at all because it appeared to her that a married woman could enjoy society with less restraint than a girl who was subject to her mother or her chaperon; that she would have more freedom of action as a married woman; and now she was told that she must wait for a baby before she could have anything to do. Courcy Castle was sometimes dull, but Courcy Castle would have been better than this.

When Crosbie returned home after this little conversation about the baby, he was told by his wife that they were to dine with the Gazebees on the next Sunday. On hearing this he shook his head with vexation. He knew, however, that he had no right to make complaint, as he had been only taken to St. John's Wood once since they had come home from their marriage trip. There was, however, one point as to which he could grumble. "Why, on earth, on Sunday?"

"Because Amelia asked me for Sunday. If you are asked for Sunday, you cannot say you'll go on Monday."

"It is so terrible on a Sunday afternoon. At what hour?"

"She said half-past five."

"Heavens and earth! What are we to do all the evening?"

"It is not kind of you, Adolphus, to speak in that way of my relations."

"Come, my love, that's a joke; as if I hadn't heard you say the same

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thing twenty times. You've complained of having to go up there much more bitterly than I ever did. You know I like your sister, and, in his way, Gazebee is a very good fellow; but after three or four hours, one begins to have had enough of him."

"It can't be much duller than it is——;" but Lady Alexandrina stopped herself before she finished her speech.

"One can always read at home, at any rate," said Crosbie.

"One can't always be reading. However, I have said you would go. If you choose to refuse, you must write and explain."

When the Sunday came the Crosbies of course did go to St. John's Wood, arriving punctually at that door which he so hated at half-past five. One of the earliest resolutions which he made when he first contemplated the De Courcy match, was altogether hostile to the Gazebees. He would see but very little of them. He would shake himself free of that connexion. It was not with that branch of the family that he desired an alliance. But now, as things had gone, that was the only branch of the family with which he seemed to be allied. He was always hearing of the Gazebees. Amelia and Alexandrina were constantly together. He was now dragged there to a Sunday dinner; and he knew that he should often be dragged there,—that he could not avoid such draggings. He already owed money to Mortimer Gazebee, and was aware that his affairs had been allowed to fall into that lawyer's hands in such a way that he could not take them out again. His house was very thoroughly furnished, and he knew that the bills had been paid; but he had not paid them; every shilling had been paid through Mortimer Gazebee.

"Go with your mother and aunt, De Courcy," the attorney said to the lingering child after dinner; and then Crosbie was left alone with his wife's brother-in-law. This was the period of the St. John's Wood purgatory which was so dreadful to him. With his sister-in-law he could talk, remembering perhaps always that she was an earl's daughter. But with Gazebee he had nothing in common. And he felt that Gazebee, who had once treated him with great deference, had now lost all such feeling. Crosbie had once been a man of fashion in the estimation of the attorney, but that was all over. Crosbie, in the attorney's estimation, was now simply the secretary of a public office,—a man who owed him money. The two had married sisters, and there was no reason why the light of the prosperous attorney should pale before that of the civil servant, who was not very prosperous. All this was understood thoroughly by both the men.

"There's terrible bad news from Courcy," said the attorney, as soon as the boy was gone.

"Why; what's the matter?"

"Porlock has married;—that woman, you know."

"Nonsense."

"He has. The old lady has been obliged to tell me, and she's nearly broken-hearted about it. But that's not the worst of it to my mind. All

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the world knows that Porloch had gone to the mischief. But he is going to bring an action against his father for some arrears of his allowance, and he threatens to have everything out in court, if he doesn't get his money."

"But is there money due to him?"

"Yes, there is. A couple of thousand pounds or so. I suppose I shall have to find it. But, upon my honour, I don't know where it's to come from; I don't, indeed. In one way or another, I've paid over fourteen hundred pounds for you."

"Fourteen hundred pounds!"

"Yes, indeed;—what with the insurance and the furniture, and the bill from our house for the settlements. That's not paid yet, but it's the same thing. A man doesn't get married for nothing, I can tell you."

"But you've got security."

"Oh, yes; I've got security. But the thing is the ready money. Our house has advanced so much on the Courcy property, that they don't like going any further; and therefore it is that I have to do this myself. They'll all have to go abroad,—that'll be the end of it. There's been such a scene between the earl and George. George lost his temper and told the earl that Porlock's marriage was his fault. It has ended in George with his wife being turned out."

"He has money of his own."

"Yes, but he won't spend it. He's coming up here, and we shall find him hanging about us. I don't mean to give him a bed here, and I advise you not to do so either. You'll not get rid of him if you do."

"I have the greatest possible dislike to him."

"Yes; he's a bad fellow. So is John. Porlock was the best, but he's gone altogether to ruin. They've made a nice mess of it between them; haven't they?"

This was the family for whose sake Crosbie had jilted Lily Dale! His single and simple ambition had been that of being an earl's son-in-law. To achieve that it had been necessary that he should make himself a villain. In achieving it he had gone through all manner of dirt and disgrace. He had married a woman whom he knew he did not love. He was thinking almost hourly of a girl whom he had loved, whom he did love, but whom he had so injured, that, under no circumstances, could he be allowed to speak to her again. The attorney there, who sat opposite to him, talking about his thousands of pounds with that disgusting assumed solicitude which such men put on, when they know very well what they are doing, had made a similar marriage. But he had known what he was about. He had got from his marriage all that he had expected. But what had Crosbie got?

"They're a bad set,—a bad set," said he in his bitterness.

"The men are," said Gazebee, very comfortably.

"H—m," said Crosbie. It was manifest to Gazebee that his friend was expressing a feeling that the women also were not all that they

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should be, but he took no offence, though some portion of the censure might thereby be supposed to attach to his own wife.

"The countess means well," said Gazebee. "But she's had a hard life of it,—a very hard life. I've heard him call her names that would frighten a coalheaver. I have, indeed. But he'll die soon, and then she'll be comfortable. She has three thousand a year jointure."

He'll die soon, and then she'll be comfortable! That was one phase of married life. As Crosbie's mind dwelt upon the words he remembered Lily's promise made in the fields, that she would do everything for him. He remembered her kisses; the touch of her fingers; the low silvery laughing voice; the feel of her dress as she would press close to him. After that he reflected whether it would not be well that he too should die, so that Alexandrina might be comfortable. She and her mother might be very comfortable together, with plenty of money, at Baden Baden!

The squire at Allington, and Mrs. Dale, and Lady Julia De Guest, had been, and still were, uneasy in their minds because no punishment had fallen upon Crosbie,—no vengeance had overtaken him in consequence of his great sin. How little did they know about it! Could he have been prosecuted and put into prison, with hard labour, for twelve months, the punishment would not have been heavier. He would in that case, at any rate, have been saved from Lady Alexandrina.

"George and his wife are coming up to town; couldn't we ask them to come to us for a week or so?" said his wife to him, as soon as they were in the fly together, going home.

"No," shouted Crosbie; "we will do no such thing." There was not another word said on the subject,—nor on any other subject till they got home. When they reached their house Alexandrina had a headache, and went up to her room immediately. Crosbie threw himself into a chair before the remains of a fire in the dining-room, and resolved that he would cut the whole De Courcy family together. His wife, as his wife, should obey him. She should obey him,—or else leave him and go her way by herself, leaving him to go his way. There was an income of twelve hundred a year. Would it not be a fine thing for him if he could keep six hundred for himself and return to his old manner of life. All his old comforts of course he would not have,—nor the old esteem and regard of men. But the luxury of a club dinner he might enjoy. Unembarrassed evenings might be his,—with liberty to him to pass them as he pleased. He knew many men who were separated from their wives, and who seemed to be as happy as their neighbours. And then he remembered how ugly Alexandrina had been this evening, wearing a great tinsel coronet full of false stones, with a cold in her head which had reddened her nose. There had, too, fallen upon her in these her married days a certain fixed dreary dowdiness. She certainly was very plain! So he said to himself, and then he went to bed. I myself am inclined to think that his punishment was sufficiently severe.

The next morning his wife still complained of headache, so that he

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breakfasted alone. Since that positive refusal which he had given to her proposition for inviting her brother, there had not been much conversation between them. "My head is splitting, and Sarah shall bring some tea and toast up to me, if you will not mind it."

He did not mind it in the least, and ate his breakfast by himself, with more enjoyment than usually attended that meal.

It was clear to him that all the present satisfaction of his life must come to him from his office work. There are men who find it difficult to live without some source of daily comfort, and he was such a man. He could hardly endure his life unless there were some page in it on which he could look with gratified eyes. He had always liked his work, and he now determined that he would like it better than ever. But in order that he might do so it was necessary that he should have much of his own way. According to the theory of his office, it was incumbent on him as Secretary simply to take the orders of the Commissioners, and see that they were executed; and to such work as this his predecessor had strictly confined himself. But he had already done more than this, and had conceived the ambition of holding the Board almost under his thumb. He flattered himself that he knew his own work and theirs better than they knew either, and that by a little management he might be their master. It is not impossible that such might have been the case had there been no fracas at the Paddington station; but, as we all know, the dominant cock of the farmyard must be ever dominant. When he shall once have had his wings so smeared with mud as to give him even the appearance of adversity, no other cock will ever respect him again. Mr. Optimist and Mr. Butterwell knew very well that their secretary had been cudgelled, and they could not submit themselves to a secretary who had been so treated.

"Oh, by-the-by, Crosbie," said Butterwell, coming into his room, soon after his arrival at his office on that day of his solitary breakfast, "I want to say just a few words to you." And Butterwell turned round and closed the door, the lock of which had not previously been fastened. Crosbie, without much thinking, immediately foretold himself the nature of the coming conversation.

"Do you know——" said Butterwell, beginning.

"Sit down, won't you?" said Crosbie, seating himself as he spoke. If there was to be a contest, he would make the best fight he could. He would show a better spirit here than he had done on the railway platform. Butterwell did sit down, and felt, as he did so, that the very motion of sitting took away some of his power. He ought to have sent for Crosbie into his own room. A man, when he wishes to reprimand another, should always have the benefit of his own atmosphere.

"I don't want to find any fault," Butterwell began.

"I hope you have not any cause," said Crosbie.

"No, no; I don't say that I have. But we think at the Board——"

"Stop, stop, Butterwell. If anything unpleasant is coming, it had

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better come from the Board. I should take it in better spirit; I should, indeed."

"What takes place at the Board must be official."

"I shall not mind that in the least. I should rather like it than otherwise."

"It simply amounts to this,—that we think you are taking a little too much on yourself. No doubt, it's a fault on the right side, and arises from your wishing to have the work well done."

"And if I don't do it, who will?" asked Crosbie.

"The Board is very well able to get through all that appertains to it. Come, Crosbie, you and I have known each other a great many years, and it would be a pity that we should have any words. I have come to you in this way because it would be disagreeable to you to have any question raised officially. Optimist isn't given to being very angry, but he was downright angry yesterday. You had better take what I say in good part, and go along a little quieter."

But Crosbie was not in a humour to take anything quietly. He was sore all over, and prone to hit out at everybody that he met. "I have done my duty to the best of my ability, Mr. Butterwell," he said, "and I believe I have done it well. I believe I know my duty here as well as any one can teach me. If I have done more than my share of work, it is because other people have done less than theirs." As he spoke, there was a black cloud upon his brow, and the Commissioner could perceive that the Secretary was very wrathful.

"Oh! very well," said Butterwell, rising from his chair. "I can only, under such circumstances, speak to the Chairman, and he will tell you what he thinks at the Board. I think you're foolish; I do, indeed. As for myself, I have only meant to act kindly by you." After that, Mr. Butterwell took himself off.

On the same afternoon, Crosbie was summoned into the board-room in the usual way, between two and three. This was a daily occurrence, as he always sat for about an hour with two out of the three Commissioners, after they had fortified themselves with a biscuit and a glass of sherry. On the present occasion, the usual amount of business was transacted, but it was done in a manner which made Crosbie feel that they did not all stand together on their usual footing. The three Commissioners were all there. The Chairman gave his directions in a solemn pompous voice, which was by no means usual to him when he was in good humour. The major said little or nothing; but there was a gleam of satisfied sarcasm in his eye. Things were going wrong at the Board, and he was pleased. Mr. Butterwell was exceedingly civil in his demeanour, and rather more than ordinarily brisk. As soon as the regular work of the day was over, Mr. Optimist shuffled about on his chair, rising from his seat, and then sitting down again. He looked through a lot of papers close to his hand, peering at them over his spectacles. Then he selected one, took off his spectacles, leaned back in his chair, and began his little speech.

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"Mr. Crosbie," he said, "we are all very much gratified,—very much gratified, indeed,—by your zeal and energy in the service."

"Thank you, sir," said Crosbie; "I am fond of the service."

"Exactly, exactly; we all feel that. But we think that you,—if I were to say take too much upon yourself, I should say, perhaps, more than we mean."

"Don't say more than you mean, Mr. Optimist." Crosbie's eyes, as he spoke, gleamed slightly with his momentary triumph; as did also those of Major Fiasco.

"No, no, no," said Mr. Optimist; "I would say rather less than more to so very good a public servant as yourself. But you, doubtless, understand me?"

"I don't think I do quite, sir. If I have not taken too much on me, what is it that I have done that I ought not to have done?"

"You have given directions in many cases for which you ought first to have received authority. Here is an instance," and the selected paper was at once brought out.

It was a matter in which the Secretary had been manifestly wrong according to written law, and he could not defend it on its own merits.

"If you wish me," said he, "to confine myself exactly to the positive instructions of the office, I will do so; but I think you will find it inconvenient."

"It will be far the best," said Mr. Optimist.

"Very well," said Mr. Crosbie, "it shall be done." And he at once determined to make himself as unpleasant to the three gentlemen in the room as he might find it within his power to do. He could make himself very unpleasant, but the unpleasantness would be as much to him as to them.

Nothing would now go right with him. He could look in no direction for satisfaction. He sauntered into Sebright's, as he went home, but he could not find words to speak to any one about the little matters of the day. He went home, and his wife, though she was up, complained still of her headache.

"I haven't been out of the house all day," she said, "and that has made it worse."

"I don't know how you are to get out, if you won't walk," he answered.

Then there was no more said between them till they sat down to their meal.

Had the squire at Allington known all, he might, I think, have been satisfied with the punishment which Crosbie had encountered.

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Marriage Settlements.

Of the many differences between French and English novels one of the most striking is to be found in the fulness with which French novelists enter into the business arrangements between their characters, the apparently well-founded confidence which they show in discussing them. To an English novelist, even if he is a novelist of a high class, all such matters are an unknown land. They are passed over in general terms, and every device is used for the purpose of avoiding details. French novelists revel in such things. Perhaps a third of Balzac's stories is filled by minute accounts of the affairs of his characters. He is as fond of financial statements as a chancellor of the exchequer, and when a lady is to be married, he appears to think quite as much of the clauses of the marriage contract as of the marriage itself. Balzac carried this to a length which was almost absurd, but he only exaggerated a taste highly characteristic of his countrymen. One effect of this is that much more is to be learnt from novels about France than about England, and of the facts so to be learnt few are more striking to an English reader than the comparative freedom of action of French married women in all matters of business. In French novels the mother of the heroine, or the heroine herself if married, is always taking an active part in money matters. She invests, she speculates, she makes bargains with her husband or her son-in-law, she buys and sells, and does as she pleases, till the English reader, if not unused to the miseries of trusteeship, wonders how the trustees of her settlement could sleep in their beds without hideous visions of breaches of trust and irate equity judges. His wonder would perhaps be increased if he knew that on the other side of the Channel there are no marriage settlements in our sense of the word, no trustees, and no courts of equity. It may be worth his consideration whether his own adoption of these costly luxuries is wise or not.

When any arrangement has become matter of routine, it ceases with surprising rapidity to be matter of discussion. It becomes part of the regular established course of affairs to which every one submits in his turn, and even if an occasional grumble is heard, the disinclination to take the trouble of considering the matter on principle is so great and general, that until attention is drawn to it by some special instance of individual hardship, or by some speculation which happens to attract notice by its form or power, matters go on as they are for an incalculable time. This is especially true of all customs which are in any way connected with the law. Customary ways of living, customary ways of conducting business, customary prescriptions in medicine, that collection of customs, as to dress,

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food, &c., which collectively constitute fashion, and a thousand other customs of the same kind, flourish and fade with a certain degree of quickness. Sometimes they are transitory enough to lead people to speak of their caprice and instability as if these were their most characteristic features, the truth being that they change within a narrow range only, and vary very little indeed beyond that circle. When the law comes in, the strength of custom appears in its full light.

Law is a difficult thing to learn. Men feel a kind of pride in its intricacy when they have learnt it, just as they might in any other out-of-the-way piece of knowledge. Moreover, the law is like the sea. The Atlantic Ocean is an immense place, and might be traversed by ships in any direction; but, in fact, there are but a few narrow bands of it which are so traversed, and the rest is left almost entirely unvisited. So with law. There are millions of actions which are perfectly legal, and millions of arrangements of every sort which people might make if they pleased. There are, however, a very small number of courses which the law actually, and as a matter of fact, has recognized as legal, and of which the legal consequences are thoroughly well known and ascertained. Those few courses of conduct are accordingly followed on all occasions, and whenever the necessity arises for performing any one of the acts to which they relate, the appropriate way of doing it is thoroughly well ascertained, and is as rigidly prescribed by legal custom, as it could be by legal enactment.

These observations are peculiarly appropriate to the case of marriage settlements. When two people are engaged to be married, the business part of the matter is, according to the ordinary phrase, "put into the hands" of a solicitor, or perhaps two, as the case may be, and by them a little private code of laws is drawn up, which no power on earth, short of Parliament, can repeal or alter, which is to regulate some of the most important affairs of the family for a whole generation—during the joint life-time of the persons to be married at least, and possibly for a much longer period. This document is, as a rule, prepared with but little attention to the particular circumstances of the parties, according to certain forms which happen to have come into fashion for such purposes, and which are so managed as to leave those who have to be guided by them singularly little choice as to the course to be taken. The common course where people marry who have money enough to want to have a settlement, and who are not great landed proprietors, is to convey the property to be settled to trustees, who are to invest it either in land, in funds, on mortgage or railway debentures (which is a sort of mortgage), and sometimes in other specified securities, to pay the interest to the husband for life, or sometimes, in the first instance, to the wife for her separate use, with survivorship to the husband, then to the wife for life, and after their death to pay the capital to the children of the marriage on their majority or marriage equally or in such shares as the parents or surviving parent shall appoint; if there are no children, each party can usually dispose by

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will of his or her share, and if there is no will, the property is generally given to his or her family. This is the substance of the document, though, by the introduction of all manner of clauses about the appointment of new trustees, the way in which land in settlement is to descend, &c., it is usually swollen to an enormous size, and a price most unsatisfactory to those who have to pay it.

This kind of domestic legislation has become so common, indeed so nearly universal among the comfortable and moderately wealthy classes, that it is insisted on as a matter of course, as a precaution of ordinary prudence, whenever a marriage takes place in those classes. It is as much a part of the business as the wedding breakfast, or anything else connected with the transaction. It has, indeed, become so much a matter of course, that probably very few of the parents whose daughters are married in the course of the year, and not very many of the husbands who marry them, think of the expediency of the arrangement at all, or consider it an open question whether or not the contract is one which ought to be made. Common, however, as it may be, it is not by any means altogether clear that it is wise. It would be rash to give a peremptory opinion as to what ought to be done in such cases, but it may be interesting to consider some points connected with the subject, which are very often passed over unnoticed.

In the first place, it ought to be observed, that every settlement whatever is an evasion of the law of the land. The law is, that, upon marriage, the husband becomes absolutely entitled to his wife's personal property, and entitled to the profits of her real property for her life, or, if a child is born alive of the marriage, for his own life. On the other hand, the wife is entitled to a third of his land for her life, and on his dying intestate, she takes a part of his personal property, varying according to the state of his family. The law as to dower has practically been rendered obsolete by Acts of Parliament and conveyancing subtleties; but, as regards personal property and the real property of the wife, it is still in full force. Such being the law, it is obvious that every marriage settlement evades it, to the prejudice of the husband. Instead of getting his wife's property absolutely, he gets at best only a life-interest in it. Hence the law of the land and the tenor of marriage settlements stand in direct opposition to each other. If one is right, the other must be wrong. Whether either or neither is right is a curious inquiry, on which a few observations will be offered immediately, but the inconvenience of having an opposition between them is not the less real because it is not generally noticed. It consists in the fact that it converts the ordinary course of things into a set of exceptions to a general rule, and the objection to this is that, except in the cases where an exception is made in express words, the general rule applies, often in a most vexatious and mischievous manner. In the early part of Delolme's account of the English Constitution, the author (by birth a foreigner) remarks that during the early part of his residence in England he was

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constantly at a loss to understand how English people made out their right to do this, that, and the other thing, which, as a general rule, people were not allowed to do on the Continent. At last he discovered that in England people could do what they pleased, unless there was some express law to prevent them; whereas, as he said, in the continental countries with which he was acquainted, the converse was the case. Whatever may be the case in political affairs, there are many domestic relations in which the exception has become the rule, and the rule has become a mere pitfall to trip people up who have not taken proper care to bar it out in the particular instance. This is the real reason why the law relating to land is so inconceivably complicated, and why its administration is so expensive. In fact, land is, in practice, as much the absolute property of its owner as money. In theory, no subject *owns* land. All the land in England is *held* either of the Queen or of some inferior lord, and in order to understand the technicalities which attend a sale of land, it is necessary to know more or less of the history of the old rules, and of the exceptions nearly co-extensive with them, which have been provided by a long succession of legislatures. If a person is ignorant of these strange subtleties, his title may be endangered, his estate may be lost, or the intention of his will may be defeated, because of some reason, which may, perhaps, have had some force in it five hundred years ago, but which no one in the present day can even understand without a special education. To evade a bad general rule by exceptions nearly co-extensive with it, instead of substituting a reasonable rule, is as if a man, wanting for a particular reason to shut up his house, were to build up the front door, and, instead of re-opening it when the reason ceased to apply, were to construct an elaborate system of ladders, by which you might creep out of the garret window, crawl along the gutter of the roof, descend to the cellar, and come up through the hole where the coals are let in. Such a contrivance would, no doubt, let you into the street at last. It might display a great deal of quaint ingenuity, and it is even possible that it might here and there have an incidental convenience; for instance, at some particular point, it might improve the ventilation of the house, but any sensible man would open his front door at once, instead of repairing the steps of the ladders, making the handrail by the gutter a little stronger, and enlarging the entrance to the coal-cellar.

To apply this to the particular case of marriage settlements, it is obvious that the general law which regulates the effect of marriage on property was established at a time when the whole state of society was different from that in which we live. Land was then the great source of permanent income, and personal property was composed for the most part of agricultural produce, articles of furniture, and ready money. Such things as investments, in our sense of the word, were almost unknown. There were no public funds, no railways; a mortgage was rather an interest in land than a debt secured on land; indeed, the notion of living on the interest of one's money was associated, not with quiet people receiving

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dividends with mechanical regularity, but with Jews and usurers squeezing the last farthing from their victims. In such a state of things, it was natural enough to give the husband an absolute title to his wife's personal property. When he took her home to his house, he would, of course, take with her a certain quantity of furniture, plate, money to spend, possibly cattle, and other things; and, being the head of the family, would of course have the entire control over them, and so become their owner in virtue of his marriage. But does the fact, that in a very rude state of things such an arrangement would be natural, supply any reason for providing that when a man marries a woman who has 5,000*l.* a year from the funds, he ought to become the absolute owner of the 5,000*l.* a year, because early lawyers chose to put money debts and pots and pans in the same category, as being both personal property? The solid distinction was not between moveable and immovable property, but between property which supplied a permanent means of livelihood, and property which was liable to be consumed in the act of using it. There would be some sense in saying, the husband shall enjoy the wife's income for life, and shall become absolutely entitled to such of her possessions as he and she would be likely to use in common; but in our days the distinction between income derived from land and income derived from permanent property other than land is one which it is absurd to draw. The feeling that this is so is one, and perhaps the most reasonable, of the grounds on which the practice of making marriage settlements rests. They do put those portions of personal property to which they apply on the same footing on which the law of the land puts landed property; that is, they give the husband control over his wife's income, but not over her capital. If this is a good arrangement, why should it not be the rule instead of the exception? Why should the fact of marriage give the husband a right which he is never in practice allowed to enjoy, and take from the wife what she is never required to concede?

To give the full answer to this question, why this is done, in point of fact, it would be necessary to enter upon a matter far too technical to be advantageously discussed in this place—namely, the nature of the distinction which pervades our law between real and personal property, —a distinction which has done more to render the law intricate and perplexing than almost any other which has been admitted into it. The question whether it ought to be done is of more general interest, and by way of introduction to it, and in illustration of the sort of arrangements which might be made, it may be desirable to give a general outline of the way in which such things are managed in France. This will afford some useful hints as to the principles on which the matter rests.

The French law of marriage, and of the effects which marriage produces upon property, is set forth in the *Code Civile.* The provisions which apply specially to the present subject are contained in the 5th title of the 3rd book, Articles 1,387–1,580. These articles, of course, enter into many details which it would be out of place to mention on the present occasion.

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The most general and important of them are as follows:—According to the French law, people may make any arrangements they please as to the effect of marriage on their property so long as they are not immoral, and do not interfere with certain fundamental principles—for instance, the personal rights of the husband over his wife and children. They may, however, declare in general terms that they marry either upon what may be called the partnership system (*régime de la communauté*), or the dower system (*régime dotal*). The partnership system constitutes the common law of France.

According to the partnership system, the fact of marriage makes the husband and wife a firm, the capital of which is composed of all the moveable property possessed by the parties at the time of their marriage, all the moveable property which they acquire during the marriage by succession or gift, and all the immovable property acquired during the marriage. Each party, however, may receive gifts, legacies, or devises separately. The liabilities of the firm consist of all personal debts owing at the time of the marriage, of debts incurred during the marriage by the husband, or by the wife with his consent, and of certain other charges, especially the food of the married persons, and the education and maintenance of their children.

The husband alone manages the property of the firm. He can sell, alienate, or mortgage it, without the consent of the wife. He cannot, however, gratuitously give away landed property, nor the whole, nor a proportion of the moveable property, except for the advancement (*établissement*) of the children of the marriage. The partnership is dissolved by natural or civil death, or by a separation, which may be either a *séparation de biens*, or a *séparation de corps*. The *séparation de biens* may be sued for by the wife if her property is endangered, and if the disorder of her husband's affairs gives reason to fear that his property is not sufficient to satisfy his wife's demands upon him. After such a separation as to property, the wife must contribute to the expenses of the household and to the education of the children, but, subject to this, she manages her property herself, though she may not alienate her land without the husband's consent. The *séparation de corps* resembles the judicial separation known to our own Divorce Court.

Upon the dissolution of the partnership the accounts are taken according to a set of rules prescribed by the code. Each party—the wife first—is repaid the amount to which they were originally entitled. If there is not enough to satisfy the wife's claims, she may charge the separate property of the husband, though he may not charge her separate property, obviously because he, as manager, is responsible for any loss. The surplus profits of the transaction, if any, are divided equally. The husband's liability to debts is, in like manner, greater than the wife's.

This partnership system may be varied in any way that the parties like. Some of the commonest forms of variation are enumerated in the code. They vary the amount to be brought into partnership, and the

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degree of liability to be incurred. The marriage may also be contracted on the terms that the parties shall be "séparés de biens." In this case the woman retains her property and the full control of it; she is bound, in default of special agreements, to contribute a third of her income to the expenses of the household.

Under the dowry system the dower (*dot*) is defined to be "property brought by the wife to the husband to support the expenses of the marriage." The husband has the management of the dower, though neither he nor his wife, nor both together, can alienate land constituted as a dower, except in two or three specified cases, unless in the marriage contract power to do so is reserved. On the dissolution of the marriage the husband or his heirs may be called upon to repay the dower. In the case of a marriage on the dowry system, the property which is not included in the dower is called "biens paraphernaux," and is the separate property of the wife, though she cannot alienate it without the husband's consent.

Any special stipulations consistent with these leading provisions may be made by the contract of marriage.

There is a striking difference between the principles on which these rules are founded and those of our own law; and the contrast between the application of the principles is even more striking. It deserves special notice, because it is almost the only case in which, rightly or not, the French enjoy a greater amount of liberty than we. All the relations between husband and wife in this country are founded on the notion which is embodied in the maxim that husband and wife are one person in law, as explained by the equally quaint but strictly correct proviso—"and the husband is that person." This fundamental doctrine is so rigorously applied in practice, that a married woman in this country would have no proprietary rights at all but for marriage settlements, and the rights which they secure are exercised under the control and supervision of trustees. This constitutes the fundamental difference between English and French marriage settlements. The settlement in England is a device for getting the husband to give up for the sake of his intended wife some of the odious powers which the law confers upon him. The wife says in substance, "Marry me if you will, but I will not be married unless you agree to give up some of the powers which the law gives you, and unless you consent to give third persons the right to hold you to your bargain, and prevent you not only from using your lawful powers, but from abusing the natural influence of a husband to my money prejudice." The French law, speaking broadly, does not merge the wife in the husband, but considers marriage, in so far as its effects on property are concerned, as a contract like any other between two independent persons, each of whom retains his or her rights against the other, or against the world at large, after the marriage has been contracted, subject only to the general or special terms of the contract, as interpreted either by the law of the land or the wishes of the parties.

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To compare the effects of these principles on the marriage relation in general would go beyond the limits of the present subject, though it may be observed that the French lawgivers have shown anxiety to establish a system which, whether right or wrong, consults the interests of the poor and of those who have a little money, as well as those of the rich. The English law, on the other hand, makes the wife almost the property of the husband, unless she has money enough to make it worth while to have a settlement.

The first and most striking difference between the two documents is, that an English settlement has trustees and a French contract has none. This difference gives the colour to the whole tenor of each document. Upon a marriage in England the husband surrenders the control, except within very narrow limits, over a part of his own property, and gives up most of the rights which he would otherwise acquire over his wife's property, to third persons, selected for the purpose, who are interposed between the husband and wife for their own benefit, as it is supposed, and for the benefit of their future children. The trustees prevent the married persons (the word *époux*, which has no English equivalent, is very convenient) from investing their property except in certain specified ways; they prevent them from trenching on the capital except for specified purposes, such as the education and advancement of the children, subject to the consent of the trustees; and finally, they preserve the prospective interests of the children when they marry or come of age. In a French marriage there is nothing answering to this. The parties contract directly with each other, without the intervention of trustees (who are almost, if not altogether, unknown to French law), and the contract is enforced by the ordinary tribunals, as in other cases. Under the *régime de communaute* the arrangement is that, subject to special stipulations, the husband and wife shall form a partnership, the husband to be the managing partner, and to account to the wife, in person if necessary, or by his representatives if she survives him, to their children, or her heirs, if he survives her. Under the *régime dotal*, the bargain is, that, in order to assist the husband to pay the expenses of the marriage, the wife or her family will pay the husband a sum of money, which he is to manage during the marriage, and for which he or his representatives are liable to her representatives after the marriage. If "the dower is in danger," he is liable at any time to be called to account as to his proceedings. Under either system the parents may, during their life-time, advance their children, but the interest of the children on the death of the parents is provided for, not as with us by clauses in the settlement, but by the general law as to inheritances.

The result of this is, that the husband and wife together, and in most cases the husband alone, has the entire management of the property, subject to such supervision as the courts may exercise over his proceedings at her instigation. No third person has a right to interfere between them; the wife is assumed to be competent to take care of her own

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interests with the ordinary assistance of the courts of law; and the arrangements made by the law itself are presumed to be those which, subject to special modifications to meet particular cases, ought to subsist between married people. In a word, the French marriage contract is an instrument designed to apply the general law to the particular case. The English settlement is an instrument devised for the purpose of withdrawing the particular case from the general law, and putting it under a different law made for the occasion.

In comparing the merits of the two systems, it is right to observe that the presumption is in favour of the French system, because it harmonizes with the law, and allows an incomparably larger amount of liberty, and it is self-evident that the burden of proving a restraint to be beneficial is upon those who impose it. What, then, are the grounds upon which the restraints imposed by the English system may be justified, and how far are those grounds sound? Why should the management and control of a certain part of the property of the husband and of the property of the wife be transferred from the parties principally interested to trustees? Different reasons may be alleged in favour of different kinds of settlements. The case, for instance, in which one of the parties to a marriage is possessed of a great landed estate, which may almost be said to rank amongst the institutions of the country, is peculiar. Whether the existence of such estates is beneficial to the public, may perhaps be a question, but it is an entirely different question from that which is here considered. Assuming, however—and the assumption is perfectly safe—that whatever may be the merits of such a state of things, it will continue to exist, and that the laws which regulate real property will not, for the present at least, be fundamentally revolutionized, it appears hardly possible to doubt that marriage settlements relating to such estates must continue, for various technical reasons, to be framed as they are at present.

Setting these cases aside, and considering the case of those who live upon personal property, it is often said that if a woman marries a trader it is highly important that she and her children should be protected against the possibility that he may be ruined by speculation. This, however, involves no necessity for our machinery of trusts. If people could marry here, as in France, *en biens séparés*, the wife's protection as to her own property against the husband's debts would be complete. It is a very serious question whether it is desirable that she should be able to have any further protection. A man in England may marry and may settle every shilling he has in the world on his wife for her separate use. He may live handsomely, or even splendidly, on their common income, no human being knowing to whom it belongs. On the credit obtained by the appearance thus kept up he may speculate as recklessly as he pleases, and having refreshed himself in the bankruptcy court he may inform his creditors that he owns nothing at all, that he is supported entirely by his wife's charity, and that he hopes that their wives are equally charitable and equally rich. How far such an arrangement would be possible in

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France we do not profess to know, but, speaking broadly, the French law seems to be wise in not favouring such schemes. If a woman marries a man in business, that is no reason why her fortune should be embarked in the business, and it may be very right to enable her by a simple declaration to protect it from his engagements; but why should she and the common children of the marriage be protected from the natural effects of the husband's imprudent management of his own fortune? The fact that a man is in a speculative trade, the fact that he is in trade at all, the fact that he is rash or imprudent, may be a very good reason for refusing to marry him; but to want to marry a speculator without suffering for the failure of his speculations, a trader without sharing to some extent the vicissitudes of his trade, an imprudent man without being injured by his imprudence, is to wish to play at the game of "heads I win, tails you lose;" it is to try to eat your cake and have your cake.

This remark applies with still greater force to settlements made on the marriage of persons not in trade; professional men, for example, or those who live on official or other fixed incomes. Why should a man of this class and his wife be prevented from managing their own money in their own way? A doctor with a fair practice marries a woman, say with 10,000*l.* In England, if he had no private fortune, he would probably be called upon to insure his life, and to assign the policy and the 10,000*l.* to trustees on the trusts shortly described above. Under the French law he would have the entire management of the property on the terms above described. The position of the husband would obviously be better under the French law, but in what respect and under what circumstances would the position of the wife be better under the English law?

It may be said, first, that the investment clauses of the settlement secure her and give security to her parents, or those who are interested in her prosperity, that she shall have the advantage of a fair income derived from her property during her marriage; that the money shall not be squandered either in extravagant living or in rash speculation, and that there shall be something at all events to provide for the children of the marriage. It might be said—May not this man, if he gets the control of the money, dispose of it in fifty ways, and either coax or bully his wife into not interfering with his proceedings. If that happens, what will become of the children of the marriage? They will be reduced to poverty. All this sounds extremely plausible, especially in the ears of parents who do not share their daughter's enthusiasm for an accepted lover, and if courtship were the permanent state of things, if the lady were to remain all her life a girl of twenty-one or twenty-two, if the man were always to be a young gentleman with M.D. just tacked to his name, with uncertain prospects, and, above all, invested with a character as unpleasant to the old people as it is interesting to the young ones, it might be all very well. Time, however, does not stand still. Some years, to use the novelist's phrase, "elapse." The marriage turns out well. The wife's parents are dead. Her interests and wishes centre in her husband and children.

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He is a prudent, active man, and he has opportunities, which in his judgment, and in hers too, it would be of the utmost importance to the whole family to seize, of employing part of his wife's fortune in some particular way. Be the advantage never so great, be the necessity what it may, the trustees are bound by the express words of the settlement, and, unless they specifically authorize the use proposed to be made of the money, the thing cannot be done. A man and his wife thus find a set of trustees, who know and care comparatively little about them, their family and their affairs, constantly interposed between them and their own money. This is very unpleasant for the trustees, most vexatious to the parents, and if the parents are people of sense and have the ordinary inclination to consult the interest of their children, it is most disadvantageous for the children.

For instance, in the case supposed, the husband finds that his professional prospects in England are bad, but that there is an excellent opening for him at Sydney. He is most anxious to go to Sydney for other reasons: it would suit his wife's health; his and her nearest friends are settled there, &c. It would obviously be the part of a prudent man to go to Sydney, to spend part of the 10,000*l.* in getting there; to furnish a house with another part of it; and very possibly to invest the rest in mortgage or Government securities in New South Wales, where the rate of interest is considerably higher than in England. Under the French system, our physician could do all this without asking any one's leave. Under the English system he would probably be unable to apply one penny of his wife's money to any one of these purposes. He would have to borrow money for the purpose, on the security of his life-interest in the income, and submit to all the collateral vexation and expense of life insurance, &c.; in short, he would probably be unable to go at all.

This is but one instance of a hundred thousand. It may, indeed, be laid down as a general rule, which is almost self-evident if it is attended to, that an English marriage settlement of the kind in question is useful only in those cases in which the marriage itself was a mistake. If a man is such a fool as not to be fit to manage his own property, or such a brute as to be indifferent to the interests of his wife and children, and if his wife has so little character that she can neither gain his affections nor influence his conduct, nor appeal to a court of law for protection for herself and her children, the English system is, to some extent, better than the French. But to what extent, even in this case, is it better? It is quite true that under ordinary settlements it is difficult, if not impossible, to invest the settlement funds in an unsafe manner; but the husband may part with his life-interest in the income. A man of thirty, who is entitled to the interest of 10,000*l.* for his life, may get a round sum for it paid down; and suppose he squanders it, what is to become of the family till he dies? His wife may be of about the same age, and she, at all events, will get nothing till his death. His children will get something on the death of both their parents, but by that time, in all

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probability, they would have got more harm from a long interval of poverty than the sum of money to which they might ultimately be entitled would ever repay. Nay, the sum itself may be diminished by the use of the power of advancement which most settlements contain, and if a father and his grown-up children wished to combine to defraud a settlement and to defeat its objects, and had confidence in each other, they might contrive ways of doing so. Even then, in the extreme case just put, a settlement is an imperfect security, but it is surely self-evident that if a woman marries a brute and a fool, she must expect to be miserable, and her children will be wretched too.

The truth is that a large proportion of English marriage settlements are made in obedience to a sentiment which, though quite intelligible and far from unnatural, ought not to be encouraged. Marriage gives the husband, from the very nature of the case, almost unlimited power over the wife's happiness, and indeed over her character and herself, and parents naturally see in their daughters' lovers men who are about to destroy all the authority which they have hitherto exercised, to weaken very greatly some of the closest ties of affection, to put new elements—elements of which the parents may totally disapprove—into the characters which they have educated, and to a great extent framed, and, over and above that, to exercise a sort of despotism over their persons and property, except in so far as the stipulations of a settlement may restrain them. A man is naturally jealous of all this in the highest degree, and the marriage settlement is the only channel through which his jealousy can find an open vent. He and his lawyer frame it with the unexpressed and hardly conscious conviction—for the lawyer is always a man of routine, and the father's feelings are excited—that they are taking precautions against an enemy. Mind he does not speculate, mind he does not waste the money, mind he does not rob the children; don't leave anything to my daughter's discretion—she is so infatuated with this fellow, who seems to me nothing particular, that she would give her eyes out of her head if he asked her; tie him up hand and foot, and get every farthing out of him that you possibly can. These, not in words, but in tone and spirit, are the instructions which men usually give to the attorney who frames their daughters' settlements. They forget, or rather they do not like to remember, that when all is said and done, the husband will be nearer and dearer to the wife than the father or mother; that the presumption is, that he will care much more for her than they do, and a thousand times more for her children; that in all probability he will know his own business best; that, in tying his hands, they are tying hands that would be used for her service in circumstances which cannot possibly be foreseen; and that if the horse really requires such elaborate kicking straps and martingales, he had better not be put into harness at all. No conditions that can be framed can prevent a husband from destroying his wife's happiness, debauching her mind, making her children scoundrels and outcasts, ruining their name, their character, and their very souls, and when a man is freely

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allowed to do all this without restraint, is it not rather straining at a gnat while swallowing a camel to prevent his investing her money, except in government securities, or on mortgage of freehold estates in England?

In applying these views to practice, it must always be remembered that, though the existing law and the practice founded upon it may be very inconvenient, though they imply a low view of the relation between husband and wife, and a low estimate of the sense and spirit of married women, they go together, and it is nearly impossible to alter the one without altering the other. So long as the law is what it is, it is simply impossible for the friends of a lady about to marry to allow her to marry without any settlement at all, as the effect of doing so would be to make a present of the whole of her property to her husband, leaving her wholly dependent on him. If she had a right to be considered as his partner, if she could sue him during the marriage, or sue his executors after his death, as a French wife can, for an account of the partnership funds, she might be trusted to take care of herself. A grown-up woman ought to be, and generally is, fully able to protect herself and her children from force or fraud, and there is no reason for interfering with the legitimate influence which an affectionate husband acquires over his wife. If she wishes to spend part of her fortune, or even the whole of it, in helping him in his necessities, why should she be prevented beforehand from doing so? Why should it be supposed that her relations will understand her interests before marriage better than she will understand them afterwards? As matters actually stand, however, a settlement is the only protection available against a state of the law which is most oppressive, and though it is an awkward and cumbrous one, it can hardly be dispensed with. The only practical advice which can be given to persons about to marry, so long as the law remains unaltered, is to make the investment clause as wide as possible, to prevent the attorneys on the one side and the other from viewing the parties to the marriage as natural enemies, likely to abuse their powers to the utmost to each other's disadvantage, utterly unfit to be trusted with the management of their own affairs, and likely to care far less for the interests of their children when they are actually born than the possible grandfathers and grandmothers before they are thought of. Let them remember, in a word, that if the marriage is a happy one, the settlement will be a mere nuisance; whilst if the marriage is unhappy, the settlement at best may be a trifling alleviation of part of the misery which such a marriage will involve.

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Colours of the Double Stars.

Hither, when all the deep unsounded skies
  Shuddered with silent stars, she clomb,
And as with optic glasses her keen eyes
  Pierced thro' the mystic dome,
Regions of lucid matter taking forms,
  Brushes of fire, hazy gleams,
Clusters and beds of worlds, and bee-like swarms
  Of suns, and starry streams.
She saw the snowy poles of moonless Mars,
  That marvellous round of milky light
Below Orion, and those double stars
  Whereof the one more bright
Is circled by the other.

TENNYSON.

If the stars be observed on a clear night, it will be seen that they shine with different colours. The most noticeable hues are red, white, and yellow; no stars exhibit a distinct blue or green colour, though some have a bluish or greenish tinge. In our Northern latitudes, where the air is scarcely ever free from haze and vapour, this diversity of colouring is not, perhaps, very striking; but in Southern climes, and especially in inland regions, where the air is less humid, the effect is far greater: the whole vault of heaven seems set with sparkling gems. The difference of tint we have mentioned, is perceptible to the naked eye, in our clime, only among stars of the first and second magnitudes. Even among these observers differ slightly; the colours, however, of the following bright stars are unmistakable:—Aldebaran, Arcturus, Betelgueux, and Pollux, are red; Sirius, Arided, and Regulus, are white; Capella, Procyon, and Dubhe, are yellow. Altair, Vega, Spica, and Castor, are generally described as white. The first two are not very distant from each other, and can be readily compared. Vega, passing near the zenith early in the afternoon at this season of the year, will be recognized by its brilliancy and the two companion stars to the south, a little westerly. In the same direction from Vega, lies Altair, the central and brightest star of three near together. It will be found that Altair and Vega present a decided contrast. The former exhibits a yellowish tinge, while Vega shines with a bluish white colour, which may be aptly compared to the gleam of polished steel. The beautiful star, Spica, is of the same colour as Vega; perhaps the blue tinge is slightly more decided in Spica. Castor, the western star of the twin stars Castor and Pollux, will be found in the evening in the east. It has a slightly green tinge when seen by the naked

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eye, or in a telescope of moderate power. A telescope of higher power resolves it into two stars, one white, the other pale green.

The ancients noted some of these brighter stars, and we thus learn the remarkable fact *that their colours are not unchangeable.* Sirius was celebrated in the writings of the ancients as a bright red star; it is now decidedly white. Other changes have been noted, and some of these have occurred within a comparatively short time. Startling thoughts are suggested by these variations: we seem urged to the conclusion that some vast change has taken place in the very constitution of these orbs; and thence might gather that it is within the bounds of possibility that, at some future period, the light dispensed by our own sun should be similarly modified! We shall presently notice a theory, or rather a speculation, that has been started on this subject. Before doing so, however, we must describe the singular and beautiful phenomena revealed by the telescope.

Among the stars either altogether unseen, or but faintly visible, to the naked eye, the telescope reveals the same diversity of colouring. Many of these stars, indeed, are found to be coloured in a more marked manner than those we have hitherto mentioned. Stars are found shining with a scarlet, blood-red, brilliant orange, or deep yellow colour. Still, however, no stars of a deep blue or green tint occur singly. Thus far, then, the telescope has merely extended the range of our view, without disclosing appearances differing in any important respect from those already observed. When, however, a telescope of sufficient power is directed successively to double or multiple stars, we soon notice new and singular phenomena. Not only do we find every shade and tint of the primary and secondary colours, and such hues as grey, fawn, and ash-colour, but we notice that in many cases the stars forming a binary system are of complementary colours. Struve has observed that this is the case in upwards of one hundred of the double systems. In triple and multiple systems, similar arrangements of colour are noticed.

We append a list of some of the most remarkable and beautiful binary stars within the reach of telescopes of moderate power. The number following the name of each star expresses its magnitude. For the convenience of those of our readers who may desire to view these objects, and who possess charts of the heavens, or celestial globes, we give the position of each star, on the figure representing the constellation to which it belongs.

ι Cancri (5), in the northern claw. Orange and purple.

δ Herculis (4), on the eastern arm, near the body. Light green and red.

24 Comæ Berenicis (6), near the northern wing of Virgo. Orange and green.

61 Cygni (6), near the southern foot. Both yellow.

8 Monocerotis (4), on the nostril. Gold and lilac.

κ Bootis (6), on the northern hand. White and blue.

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ζ Ursæ Minoris (3), in the Bear's tail. White and light green. Distance 14″. If this star (Mizar) be observed with the naked eye on a clear night, a faint companion (Alcor) will be observed close beside it. The distance between Mizar and Alcor is no less than 720″, yet from observations of their proper motions, which are found to be identical, astronomers conclude that they form one system; a triple one, since Mizar is a double star. On the other hand, a fourth star, nearer to Mizar than Alcor is, is found to have a different proper motion, whence we may conclude that its association with Mizar and Alcor is not physical, but merely optical.

β Scorpii (2), a bright star in the Scorpion's head. White and lilac.

β Cygni, Albireo (3), on the beak. Yellow and blue.

η Cassiopeiæ (4), on the waist. White and purple.

γ Delphini (4), near the eye. Yellow and green.

γ Arietis, Mesartim (4), at the tip of the western horn; the first double star detected by the telescope. White and grey.

ε^4 and ε^5 Lyræ (5), a quadruple star, on the stand of the Lyre. A very low power resolves the star into a double one, the distance between the constituents being no less than 210″. Each of these, when closely observed with higher powers, is found to be a double star. The distance between the first pair is 3·2″; the colours are white and pale red. The distance between the second pair is 2·6″; both are white.

It has been suggested that the diversity of colouring of which we have given these illustrations may be merely the effect of contrast. It is well known that in the neighbourhood of any brightly coloured object, other objects, less bright, appear tinged with the opposite, or complementary colour. Thus, if the scarlet curtains of a window, through which the light of the sun is pouring, be drawn close, objects in the room, not actually under the glare of the red light thus produced, appear green; even the blaze of a bright fire assuming that colour. Where one star is large and of a decided colour, the other small and of the true complementary colour, this explanation is not only plausible, but probable. But the reader cannot have failed to notice in the above list of double stars, many cases in which the colours of both constituents are decided, yet not complementary. In some instances both stars are of the same colour, or very nearly so. Here, then, the suggested explanation altogether fails. Again, we may subject this solution of the difficulty to the test of experiment. Where the components of a binary system are not too close, we may hide one, and allow the other to be seen. Thus, the effect of contrast being removed, we should expect the colouring of the visible constituent to disappear. In some cases, indeed, a decided modification is thus produced in the apparent colouring of the smaller component of a double system. More frequently, however, the colours remain as distinct, when the stars are viewed separately, as when both are in the field of view. Struve notes this specially in the case of the three stars composing ε^2 Cygni, the

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largest of which is orange, the two smallest being blue. Nichol observes the same phenomenon in the fine double star Albireo (β Cygni). He remarks that, independently of the crucial test applied, "he cannot see those stars blazing, one with its yellow, the other with its blue light, and accept the optical hypothesis for one moment."

Thus far, then, we seem driven to the conclusion, that the colours observed in binary, triple, or multiple systems of stars, are inherent in the separate members of those systems; that either they differ in their original constitution, or have arrived at different stages of modification and development. We can have little doubt that these systems, and the stars generally, are engirdled about by planets, which, in their turn, are the abodes of living creatures. Without entering here, at any length, on the vexed question of the plurality of worlds, it may, we think, be safely said, that no trick of logic will convince the reflective mind that the myriads of bright orbs visible to the eye, or revealed by the telescope, or the myriads on myriads that no eye of man has seen, or shall ever see, speed in their orbits through a gigantic solitude—that from no spot in the illimitable universe but the speck that we inhabit arises the voice of adoration or of prayer. Imagine then, if possible, the effect of the diversity of colouring we have described, on the inhabitants of the planetary members attending on these systems. Or rather, agree with the younger Herschel, that "it may be easier suggested in words than conceived in imagination, what a variety of illumination two stars—a red and a green, or a yellow and blue one—must afford a planet circulating around either; and what cheering contrasts and grateful vicissitudes (a red and a green day, for instance, alternating with a white one, or with darkness) must arise from the presence or absence of one or other, or both, from the horizon." What should be the nature of beings inhabiting such planets, what the material constitution or products of those planets themselves, it were beyond the faculties given to man to imagine. It is sufficient that we know that their Almighty Creator has, with infinite wisdom and mercy, adjusted their nature and their powers to the situation in which He has placed them.

We shall now call the attention of the reader to a series of speculations offering a different explanation of the diversity of colouring among the stars. If these theories should be confirmed by observation and experiment, we need no longer resort to the idea that there is any material difference either in the original constitution, or present stage of development of these orbs. We shall require to make some preliminary remarks by way of illustration.

First, let the reader imagine himself on the bank of a canal, observing a series of waves, uniformly propagated along the stream. If he wishes to determine the *height* of these waves, he will have to remain satisfied with a rough approximation only. Many methods will readily suggest themselves, but none on whose exact accuracy he can depend. It might seem that it would be equally difficult to determine exactly the *breadth* of the waves, that is, the distance between successive crests. A very

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simple method, however, will suffice to determine this feature of the waves, with any required degree of accuracy. Let the observer, fixing his eye on a certain wave, walk any measured distance (say 100 yards) at the same rate as the wave is moving. Suppose he accomplishes this distance in 65 seconds. He knows, then, that the velocity of transmission of the waves is 100 yards in 65 seconds. Let him now, standing still for 65 seconds, count the number of crests that pass him in that time. Suppose 360 pass him. Then, from his first observation, he knows that the first which passed him has travelled 100 yards from him. Within that distance all the 360 waves are uniformly distributed. Thus the breadth of each is $\frac{1}{360}$th part of 100 yards, or ten inches. This result is perfectly reliable, if, during his second observation, his position on the bank has been unchanged. But let us imagine that he has made this observation from a truck—on rails by the canal's edge—and that, unnoticed by him, the truck has glided uniformly along the rails. First, suppose that this motion has taken place in a direction contrary to that of the waves, and that while he is counting the passing crests the truck glides a distance of 20 yards. It is evident that when the last wave passes him, the first is 120 yards, instead of 100, from him. Thus the 360 waves are distributed over 120 yards, and the true breadth of each is $\frac{1}{360}$th part of 120 yards, or twelve inches. If, on the other hand, the truck had moved over 20 yards, in the same direction as the waves, it is equally obvious that the 360 waves are distributed over only 80 yards, and the true breadth of each is therefore $\frac{1}{360}$th part of 80 yards, or only eight inches. Similarly, at whatever rate the truck moves, it is evident the observer can no longer depend on the result of his observations. If it moves in a direction opposite to that in which the waves travel, they appear narrower, if it moves with them they appear broader, than they really are. Indeed, it is not difficult to conceive the truck to move in the same direction, and at the same rate, as the waves travel, in which case (if we could suppose the observer to remain unconscious of that motion) all undulation would appear to him to have ceased, and the water to have a waved but unmoving surface.

Let us now raise our thoughts to the aërial waves producing sound. Corresponding to the *height* of the waves before considered, we must now speak of the *magnitude* of the waves, that is, the amplitude of the vibrations producing them. This determines the loudness of the sound, and, *vice versâ*, the loudness of different sounds enables us to form some idea of the relative amplitudes of the vibrations producing them. We might still speak of the *breadth* of the waves, or the distance between successive points of equal concentration; we shall, however, speak of this distance as the *length* of the waves, that being the more usual mode of expression. This feature determines the *note* of a sound, and from the note we may, in turn, determine the length of the waves producing it. But let us consider if this determination is, in every case, to be depended on. If the observer and the source of sound are both at rest, or both

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moving in the same direction with equal velocities, there is no reason for doubting the correctness of this criterion. But if either the observer or the source of sound is moving, or if both are in motion, in different directions, may we not imagine that in this case, as in the former, the length of the waves will no longer be correctly determined from the note, unless the observer takes such motion, or motions, into account? We should expect that the waves would appear shorter, that is, the note of the sound higher, if the observer's distance from the source of sound is diminishing, and *vice versâ*. To produce an appreciable effect, the relative velocity of the observer and the source of sound must bear an appreciable relation to the velocity of sound, or more than 740 miles an hour. A velocity sufficiently great for this purpose may readily be obtained on a railway. A velocity of thirty-seven miles an hour, or $\frac{1}{20}$th of the velocity of sound, would sensibly affect the note of any sound, supposing our theory to be correct. On this point we are no longer left in doubt. The results of experiments tried on the railway uniting Utrecht and Maarsen have been found to correspond exactly with predictions framed on the hypothesis we have stated. These experiments are thus described by the late Professor Nichol:—"At intervals of something upwards of a thousand yards were placed three groups of musicians, who remained motionless during the requisite period. Another musician on the railway sounded, at intervals, one uniform note; and its effects on the ears of the stationary musicians have been fully published. From these certainly—from the recorded changes between *grave* and the more *acute*, and *vice versâ*, confirming even *numerically* what the relative velocities might have enabled one to predict,—it appears justifiable to conclude that the general theory is correct, and that the note of any sound may be greatly modified, if not wholly changed, by the velocity of the individual hearing it,"—or (it should have been added) of the source of sound itself.

We shall now present the theory of M. Doppler on the colours of the double stars. The illustrations we have given will enable the reader to anticipate its nature. Light also is propagated by undulations, which are conceived to take place in an ethereal medium of nearly infinite elasticity and impalpability, occupying all space, and the pores of solid bodies. But the undulations of which we have now to speak travel with a velocity that the human mind is utterly unable to follow; they are also of inconceivable minuteness. They are produced by vibrations whose nature is far from simple; speaking generally, however, we may say that their *amplitude* determines the *intensity* of the light produced, while the *length* of the waves formed by them determines the *colour* of the light. In general, waves of different lengths are commingled, but from the colour of the light, we can determine the *average* length of the waves producing it. Now, guided by the two illustrations we have given, the reader will easily see that this determination is to be depended upon as accurate, unless the observer and the source of light are approaching, or separating,

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with a velocity bearing an appreciable relation to the velocity of light. This velocity, it is well known, is no less than 191,500 miles in each second of time. Every species of motion with which we are familiar seems absolute rest when compared with this inconceivable velocity. But there are motions among the stars — orbital motions in double, triple, and multiple systems, and proper motions of these systems, and of single stars — whose velocities bear some proportion even to the immense velocity of light. Our own sun, with his attendant planets, is travelling through space with a comparatively slow movement, his velocity having been calculated at about 150,000,000 miles in a year. But we cannot doubt that the proper motions of many stars, and systems of stars, are far greater than this. We would more particularly, however, call attention to the orbital motions in double systems of stars. In some of these, in which the eccentricity of the orbits is great, each member sweeps with amazing velocity over that portion of its orbit nearest to the position of closest approach or periaster. And in many cases, owing to the immensity of the orbits described, this velocity is maintained, with little change, for many years. Now, neglecting for a moment all consideration of the proper motion common to each member of the system, let us consider the effects of the orbital motions of the two stars. Where the plane in which these movements take place is perpendicular to the line of sight of the observer on earth, it is obvious they can produce no appreciable change in the distance of either star from him. When, however, this plane is coincident with, or inclined at a small angle to, the line of sight, then, throughout the greater portion of their paths, the stars are rapidly changing their distances from the observer, one moving from, the other towards him, or *vice versâ*. Where one is much smaller than the other, its velocity will be proportionately greater. In triple and multiple systems similar movements will take place, not only in double members of such systems, but whenever such a system, or a part of one, is divided into two clusters, each revolving in an orbit of considerable eccentricity about the other.

M. Doppler urges that the considerations we have detailed are sufficient to account for the colours of the stars generally, but especially for the colours seen so conspicuously in double, triple, and multiple systems. He supposes that all the stars are white, or nearly so; that, in fact, they differ little from our sun in their original constitution and present stage of development. Where a star appears to be coloured violet, indigo, blue, or green, he conceives that, owing to its orbital motion, its proper motion, the motion of the solar system in space, or these combined, it is approaching us, with more or less velocity, according to its apparent colour. If this colour is violet, the velocity of its approach is greatest; if the apparent colour is green, this velocity is least. On the other hand, when a star appears to be coloured red, orange, or yellow, he conceives that, from similar causes, it is moving with more or less velocity from us,—a star that appears red having the greatest velocity from us, one that appears yellow the least. On

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this supposition, we could readily understand why the members of double systems would exhibit a greater variety of colours than the single stars. The latter would owe their apparent colours to their proper motions only, the former to the combination, in different ways, of their proper motions with their orbital movements. The complementary colours of so many double stars would also be easily accounted for. These colours would simply imply, according to M. Doppler's theory, that the two members of such a system were moving in opposite directions, with respect to the observer on earth. But we have already shown that, in many cases, this must necessarily happen. The theory offers no explanation of the absence of colours from the blue end of the spectrum, in single stars, and the prevalence (on the whole) even among double and multiple stars, of colours denoting separation, over those denoting approach; unless we are to suppose an expansion, or, as it were, an unwinding of our galaxy, to be taking place, at so vast a rate as to produce a velocity of separation (on the whole) among its members equivalent to the observed prevalence of colours from the red end of the spectrum. It may be suggested as a possible explanation, that light from the blue end of the spectrum suffers more by extinction or absorption, in traversing our atmosphere, and (probably) the ether occupying space, than light from the red end of the spectrum. The reader is, doubtless, already familiar with this property as the received explanation of the blue colour of the sky, and of the beautiful hues of twilight.

We need hardly point out to the reader the importance, even the magnificence, of the speculations we have just described; nor need we, on the other hand, remind him that they are, as yet, only speculations. If they should be confirmed by observation and experiment—a work which must, necessarily, be one of time—they will not merely explain a difficulty, and remove an apparent anomaly, but they will become of incalculable service in future investigations. At present, astronomers are quite unable to determine the real direction of the motion of any star. It requires the utmost delicacy of modern instruments to detect and measure the apparent motion of a star on the celestial vault. But this is only a portion, in many cases but a small portion, of the star's real motion. The other portion—that is, its motion directly from, or towards, the observer—it is utterly hopeless for him to attempt to measure by the most delicate instrument. The nearest and brightest star presents no appreciable disc, in the most powerful telescope yet made; and supposing, even, that we could discern the disc of any star, yet any change in its magnitude, or the brilliancy of the star's light, must be so excessively minute, save possibly in one or two exceptional cases, that the most delicate instrument would fail to detect, and far more to measure it. But, if M. Doppler's theory were established, we should at once obtain a measure of this very motion, and one far more exact and trustworthy than any yet obtained of the transverse motion of the stars. Again, this theory if confirmed, would afford a more powerful

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means than any we yet possess of confirming, or disproving, the supposed existence of vast opaque orbs, disturbing or modifying the motions of many of the fixed stars. In these, and many kindred subjects, of great interest to the inquiring mind, this theory would powerfully aid our investigations.

At present, we must be content to view M. Doppler's inquiries simply as we should any other speculations, not confirmed, hardly even suggested by observation and experiment. It will be established or confuted by the observations of the next few years. It must be reconciled with the observed colours and changes of colour of single stars, and more especially with the variations of motion, known to be taking place from year to year, within double and multiple systems. The investigations of star spectra, now occupying the attention of the Astronomer Royal, will doubtless reveal much as to the constitution of these orbs. How far the observed colours, or absence of colours, in nebulæ, can be applied to the investigation, it is, as yet, useless to inquire, since we know absolutely nothing, at present, of the constitutions, distances, or motions of these mysterious members of the universe.

We shall conclude with a quotation which appears to us to confirm to some extent the views of M. Doppler. In the accounts handed down to us of the celebrated new star that was seen in the year 1572, the following words are used in describing its gradual disappearance, during which, we may reasonably suppose, it was moving away from the earth, with a great and constantly increasing velocity :—" As it decreased in size, *so it varied in colour*; at first its light was white and extremely bright; *it then became yellowish, afterwards of a ruddy colour, like Mars, and finished with a pale livid colour.*"

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Cousin Phillis.

PART II.

Cousin Holman gave me the weekly county newspaper to read aloud to her, while she mended stockings out of a high piled-up basket, Phillis helping her mother. I read and read, unregardful of the words I was uttering, thinking of all manner of other things; of the bright colour of Phillis's hair, as the afternoon sun fell on her bending head; of the silence of the house, which enabled me to hear the double tick of the old clock which stood half-way up the stairs; of the variety of inarticulate noises which cousin Holman made while I read, to show her sympathy, wonder, or horror at the newspaper intelligence. The tranquil monotony of that hour made me feel as if I had lived for ever, and should live for ever droning out paragraphs in that warm sunny room, with my two quiet hearers, and the curled-up pussy cat sleeping on the hearth-rug, and the clock on the house-stairs perpetually clicking out the passage of the moments. By-and-by Betty the servant came to the door into the kitchen, and made a sign to Phillis, who put her half-mended stocking down, and went away to the kitchen without a word. Looking at cousin Holman a minute or two afterwards, I saw that she had dropped her chin upon her breast, and had fallen fast asleep. I put the newspaper down, and was nearly following her example, when a waft of air from some unseen source, slightly opened the door of communication with the kitchen, that Phillis must have left unfastened; and I saw part of her figure as she sate by the dresser, peeling apples with quick dexterity of finger, but with repeated turnings of her head towards some book lying on the dresser by her. I softly rose, and as softly went into the kitchen, and looked over her shoulder; before she was aware of my neighbourhood, I had seen that the book was in a language unknown to me, and the running title was *L'Inferno*. Just as I was making out the relationship of this word to "infernal," she started and turned round, and, as if continuing her thought as she spoke, she sighed out—

"Oh! it is so difficult! Can you help me?" putting her finger below a line.

"Me! I! Not I! I don't even know what language it is in!"

"Don't you see it is Dante?" she replied, almost petulantly; she did so want help.

"Italian, then?" said I, dubiously; for I was not quite sure.

"Yes. And I do so want to make it out. Father can help me a little, for he knows Latin; but then he has so little time."

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Cousin Phillis and her Book

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"You have not much, I should think, if you have often to try and do two things at once, as you are doing now."

"Oh! that's nothing! Father bought a heap of old books cheap. And I knew something about Dante before; and I have always liked Virgil so much! Paring apples is nothing, if I could only make out this old Italian. I wish you knew it."

"I wish I did," said I, moved by her impetuosity of tone. "If, now, only Mr. Holdsworth were here; he can speak Italian like anything, I believe."

"Who is Mr. Holdsworth?" said Phillis, looking up.

"Oh, he's our head engineer. He's a regular first-rate fellow! He can do anything;" my hero-worship and my pride in my chief all coming into play. Besides, if I was not clever and book-learned myself, it was something to belong to some one who was.

"How is it that he speaks Italian?" asked Phillis.

"He had to make a railway through Piedmont, which is in Italy, I believe; and he had to talk to all the workmen in Italian; and I have heard him say that for nearly two years he had only Italian books to read in the queer outlandish places he was in."

"Oh, dear!" said Phillis; "I wish——" and then she stopped. I was not quite sure whether to say the next thing that came into my mind; but I said it.

"Could I ask him anything about your book, or your difficulties?"

She was silent for a minute or two, and then she made reply—

"No! I think not. Thank you very much, though. I can generally puzzle a thing out in time. And then, perhaps, I remember it better than if some one had helped me. I'll put it away now, and you must move off, for I've got to make the paste for the pies; we always have a cold dinner on Sabbaths."

"But I may stay and help you, mayn't I?"

"Oh, yes; not that you can help at all, but I like to have you with me."

I was both flattered and annoyed at this straightforward avowal. I was pleased that she liked me; but I was young coxcomb enough to have wished to play the lover, and I was quite wise enough to perceive that if she had any idea of the kind in her head she would never have spoken out so frankly. I comforted myself immediately, however, by finding out that the grapes were sour. A great tall girl in a pinafore, half a head taller than I was, reading books that I had never heard of, and talking about them too, as of far more interest than any mere personal subjects; that was the last day on which I ever thought of my dear cousin Phillis as the possible mistress of my heart and life. But we were all the greater friends for this idea being utterly put away and buried out of sight.

Late in the evening the minister came home from Hornby. He had been calling on the different members of his flock; and unsatisfactory

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work it had proved to him, it seemed from the fragments that dropped out of his thoughts into his talk.

"I don't see the men; they are all at their business, their shops, or their warehouses; they ought to be there. I have no fault to find with them; only if a pastor's teaching or words of admonition are good for anything, they are needed by the men as much as by the women."

"Cannot you go and see them in their places of business, and remind them of their Christian privileges and duties, minister?" asked cousin Holman, who evidently thought that her husband's words could never be out of place.

"No!" said he, shaking his head. "I judge them by myself. If there are clouds in the sky, and I am getting in the hay just ready for loading, and rain sure to come in the night, I should look ill upon brother Robinson if he came into the field to speak about serious things."

"But, at any rate, father, you do good to the women, and perhaps they repeat what you have said to them to their husbands and children?"

"It is to be hoped they do, for I cannot reach the men directly; but the women are apt to tarry before coming to me, to put on ribbons and gauds; as if they could hear the message I bear to them best in their smart clothes. Mrs. Dobson to-day——Phillis, I am thankful thou dost not care for the vanities of dress!"

Phillis reddened a little as she said, in a low humble voice,—

"But I do, father, I'm afraid. I often wish I could wear pretty-coloured ribbons round my throat like the squire's daughters."

"It's but natural, minister!" said his wife; "I'm not above liking a silk gown better than a cotton one, myself!"

"The love of dress is a temptation and a snare," said he, gravely. "The true adornment is a meek and quiet spirit. And, wife," said he, as a sudden thought crossed his mind, "in that matter I, too, have sinned. I wanted to ask you, could we not sleep in the grey room, instead of our own?"

"Sleep in the grey room?—change our room at this time o' day?" cousin Holman asked, in dismay.

"Yes," said he. "It would save me from a daily temptation to anger. Look at my chin!" he continued; "I cut it this morning—I cut it on Wednesday when I was shaving; I do not know how many times I have cut it of late, and all from impatience at seeing Timothy Cooper at his work in the yard."

"He's a downright lazy tyke!" said cousin Holman. "He's not worth his wage. There's but little he can do, and what he can do, he does badly."

"True," said the minister. "But he is but, so to speak, a half-wit; and yet he has got a wife and children."

"More shame for him!"

"But that is past change. And if I turn him off, no one else will take him on. Yet I cannot help watching him of a morning as he goes

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sauntering about his work in the yard; and I watch, and I watch, till the old Adam rises strong within me at his lazy ways, and some day, I am afraid, I shall go down and send him about his business—let alone the way in which he makes me cut myself while I am shaving—and then his wife and children will starve. I wish we could move to the grey room."

I do not remember much more of my first visit to the Hope Farm. We went to chapel in Heathbridge, slowly and decorously walking along the lanes, ruddy and tawny with the colouring of the coming autumn. The minister walked a little before us, his hands behind his back, his head bent down, thinking about the discourse to be delivered to his people, cousin Holman said; and we spoke low and quietly, in order not to interrupt his thoughts. But I could not help noticing the respectful greetings which he received from both rich and poor as we went along; greetings which he acknowledged with a kindly wave of his hand, but with no words of reply. As we drew near the town, I could see some of the young fellows we met cast admiring looks on Phillis; and that made me look too. She had on a white gown, and a short black silk cloak, according to the fashion of the day. A straw bonnet with brown ribbon strings; that was all. But what her dress wanted in colour, her sweet bonny face had. The walk made her cheeks bloom like the rose; the very whites of her eyes had a blue tinge in them, and her dark eyelashes brought out the depth of the blue eyes themselves. Her yellow hair was put away as straight as its natural curliness would allow. If she did not perceive the admiration she excited, I am sure cousin Holman did; for she looked as fierce and as proud as ever her quiet face could look, guarding her treasure, and yet glad to perceive that others could see that it was a treasure. That afternoon I had to return to Eltham to be ready for the next day's work. I found out afterwards that the minister and his family were all "exercised in spirit," as to whether they did well in asking me to repeat my visits at the Hope Farm, seeing that of necessity I must return to Eltham on the sabbath-day. However, they did go on asking me, and I went on visiting them, whenever my other engagements permitted me, Mr. Holdsworth being in this case, as in all, a kind and indulgent friend. Nor did my new acquaintances oust him from my strong regard and admiration. I had room in my heart for all, I am happy to say, and as far as I can remember, I kept praising each to the other in a manner which, if I had been an older man, living more amongst people of the world, I should have thought unwise, as well as a little ridiculous. It was unwise, certainly, as it was almost sure to cause disappointment if ever they did become acquainted; and perhaps it was ridiculous, though I do not think we any of us thought it so at the time. The minister used to listen to my accounts of Mr. Holdsworth's many accomplishments and various adventures in travel with the truest interest, and most kindly good faith; and Mr. Holdsworth in return liked to hear about my visits to the farm, and description of my cousin's life there—liked it, I mean,

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as much as he liked anything that was merely narrative, without leading to action.

So I went to the farm certainly, on an average, once a month during that autumn; the course of life there was so peaceful and quiet, that I can only remember one small event, and that was one that I think I took more notice of than any one else: Phillis left off wearing the pinafores that had always been so obnoxious to me; I do not know why they were banished, but on one of my visits I found them replaced by pretty linen aprons in the morning, and a black silk one in the afternoon. And the blue cotton gown became a brown stuff one as winter drew on; this sounds like some book I once read, in which a migration from the blue bed to the brown was spoken of as a great family event.

Towards Christmas my dear father came to see me, and to consult Mr. Holdsworth about the improvement which has since been known as "Manning's driving wheel." Mr. Holdsworth, as I think I have before said, had a very great regard for my father, who had been employed in the same great machine-shop in which Mr. Holdsworth had served his apprenticeship; and he and my father had many mutual jokes about one of these gentlemen-apprentices who used to set about his smith's work in white wash-leather gloves, for fear of spoiling his hands. Mr. Holdsworth often spoke to me about my father as having the same kind of genius for mechanical invention as that of George Stephenson, and my father had come over now to consult him about several improvements, as well as an offer of partnership. It was a great pleasure to me to see the mutual regard of these two men. Mr. Holdsworth, young, handsome, keen, well-dressed, an object of admiration to all the youth of Eltham; my father, in his decent but unfashionable Sunday clothes, his plain, sensible face full of hard lines, the marks of toil and thought,—his hands, blackened beyond the power of soap and water by years of labour in the foundry; speaking a strong Northern dialect, while Mr. Holdsworth had a long soft drawl in his voice, as many of the Southerners have, and was reckoned in Eltham to give himself airs.

Although most of my father's leisure time was occupied with conversations about the business I have mentioned, he felt that he ought not to leave Eltham without going to pay his respects to the relations who had been so kind to his son. So he and I ran up on an engine along the incomplete line as far as Heathbridge, and went, by invitation, to spend a day at the farm.

It was odd and yet pleasant to me to perceive how these two men, each having led up to this point such totally dissimilar lives, seemed to come together by instinct, after one quiet straight look into each other's faces. My father was a thin, wiry man of five foot seven; the minister was a broad-shouldered, fresh-coloured man of six foot one; they were neither of them great talkers in general—perhaps the minister the most so—but they spoke much to each other. My father went into the fields with the minister; I think I see him now, with his hands behind his back,

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listening intently to all explanations of tillage, and the different processes of farming; occasionally taking up an implement, as if unconsciously, and examining it with a critical eye, and now and then asking a question, which I could see was considered as pertinent by his companion. Then we returned to look at the cattle, housed and bedded in expectation of the snow-storm hanging black on the western horizon, and my father learned the points of a cow with as much attention as if he meant to turn farmer. He had his little book that he used for mechanical memoranda and measurements in his pocket, and he took it out to write down "straight back," "small muzzle," "deep barrel," and I know not what else, under the head "cow." He was very critical on a turnip-cutting machine, the clumsiness of which first incited him to talk; and when we went into the house he sat thinking and quiet for a bit, while Phillis and her mother made the last preparations for tea, with a little unheeded apology from cousin Holman, because we were not sitting in the best parlour, which she thought might be chilly on so cold a night. I wanted nothing better than the blazing, crackling fire that sent a glow over all the house-place, and warmed the snowy flags under our feet till they seemed to have more heat than the crimson rug right in front of the fire. After tea, as Phillis and I were talking together very happily, I heard an irrepressible exclamation from cousin Holman,—

"Whatever is the man about!"

And on looking round, I saw my father taking a straight burning stick out of the fire, and, after waiting for a minute, and examining the charred end to see if it was fitted for his purpose, he went to the hard-wood dresser, scoured to the last pitch of whiteness and cleanliness, and began drawing with the stick; the best substitute for chalk or charcoal within his reach, for his pocket-book pencil was not strong or bold enough for his purpose. When he had done, he began to explain his new model of a turnip-cutting machine to the minister, who had been watching him in silence all the time. Cousin Holman had, in the meantime, taken a duster out of a drawer, and, under pretence of being as much interested as her husband in the drawing, was secretly trying on an outside mark how easily it would come off, and whether it would leave her dresser as white as before. Then Phillis was sent for the book on dynamics, about which I had been consulted during my first visit, and my father had to explain many difficulties, which he did in language as clear as his mind, making drawings with his stick wherever they were needed as illustrations, the minister sitting with his massive head resting on his hands, his elbows on the table, almost unconscious of Phillis, leaning over and listening greedily, with her hand on his shoulder, sucking in information like her father's own daughter. I was rather sorry for cousin Holman; I had been so once or twice before; for do what she would she was completely unable even to understand the pleasure her husband and daughter took in intellectual pursuits, much less to care in the least herself for the pursuits themselves, and was thus unavoidably thrown out of some of their interests. I had

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once or twice thought she was a little jealous of her own child, as a fitter companion for her husband than she was herself; and I fancied the minister himself was aware of this feeling, for I had noticed an occasional sudden change of subject, and a tenderness of appeal in his voice as he spoke to her, which always made her look contented and peaceful again. I do not think that Phillis ever perceived these little shadows; in the first place, she had such complete reverence for her parents that she listened to them both as if they had been St. Peter and St. Paul; and besides, she was always too much engrossed with any matter in hand to think about other people's manners and looks.

This night I could see, though she did not, how much she was winning on my father. She asked a few questions which showed that she had followed his explanations up to that point; possibly, too, her unusual beauty might have something to do with his favourable impression of her; but he made no scruple of expressing his admiration of her to her father and mother in her absence from the room; and from that evening I date a project of his which came out to me a day or two afterwards, as we sate in my little three-cornered room in Eltham.

"Paul," he began, "I never thought to be a rich man; but I think it's coming upon me. Some folk are making a deal of my new machine (calling it by its technical name), "and Ellison, of the Borough Green Works, has gone so far as to ask me to be his partner."

"Mr. Ellison the Justice!—who lives in King Street? why, he drives his carriage!" said I, doubting, yet exultant.

"Ay, lad, John Ellison. But that's no sign that I shall drive my carriage. Though I should like to save thy mother walking, for she's not so young as she was. But that's a long way off, any how. I reckon I should start with a third profit. It might be seven hundred, or it might be more. I should like to have the power to work out some fancies o' mine. I care for that much more than for th' brass. And Ellison has no lads; and by nature the business would come to thee in course o' time. Ellison's lasses are but bits o' things, and are not like to come by husbands just yet; and when they do, maybe they'll not be in the mechanical line. It will be an opening for thee, lad, if thou art steady. Thou'rt not great shakes, I know, in th' inventing line; but many a one gets on better without having fancies for something he does not see and never has seen. I'm right down glad to see that mother's cousins are such uncommon folk for sense and goodness. I have taken the minister to my heart like a brother; and she is a womanly quiet sort of a body. And I'll tell you frank, Paul, it will be a happy day for me if ever you can come and tell me that Phillis Holman is like to be my daughter. I think if that lass had not a penny, she would be the making of a man; and she'll have yon house and lands, and you may be her match yet in fortune if all goes well."

I was growing as red as fire; I did not know what to say, and yet I wanted to say something; but the idea of having a wife of my own at

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some future day, though it had often floated about in my own head, sounded so strange when it was thus first spoken about by my father. He saw my confusion, and half smiling said,—

"Well, lad, what dost say to the old father's plans? Thou art but young, to be sure; but when I was thy age, I would ha' given my right hand if I might ha' thought of the chance of wedding the lass I cared for——"

"My mother?" asked I, a little struck by the change of his tone of voice.

"No! not thy mother. Thy mother is a very good woman—none better. No! the lass I cared for at nineteen ne'er knew how I loved her, and a year or two after and she was dead, and ne'er knew. I think she would ha' been glad to ha' known it, poor Molly; but I had to leave the place where we lived for to try to earn my bread—and I meant to come back—but before ever I did, she was dead and gone: I ha' never gone there since. But if you fancy Phillis Holman, and can get her to fancy you, my lad, it shall go different with you, Paul, to what it did with your father."

I took counsel with myself very rapidly, and I came to a clear conclusion.

"Father," said I, "if I fancied Phillis ever so much, she would never fancy me. I like her as much as I could like a sister; and she likes me as if I were her brother—her younger brother."

I could see my father's countenance fall a little.

"You see she's so clever—she's more like a man than a woman—she knows Latin and Greek."

"She'd forget 'em, if she'd a houseful of children," was my father's comment on this.

"But she knows many a thing besides, and is wise as well as learned; she has been so much with her father. She would never think much of me, and I should like my wife to think a deal of her husband."

"It is not just book-learning or the want of it as makes a wife think much or little of her husband," replied my father, evidently unwilling to give up a project which had taken deep root in his mind. "It's a something—I don't rightly know how to call it—if he's manly, and sensible, and straightforward; and I reckon you're that, my boy."

"I don't think I should like to have a wife taller than I am, father," said I, smiling; he smiled too, but not heartily.

"Well," said he, after a pause. "It's but a few days I've been thinking of it, but I'd got as fond of my notion as if it had been a new engine as I'd been planning out. Here's our Paul, thinks I to myself, a good sensible breed o' lad, as has never vexed or troubled his mother or me; with a good business opening out before him, age nineteen, not so bad-looking, though perhaps not to call handsome, and here's his cousin, not too near a cousin, but just nice, as one may say; aged seventeen, good and true, and well brought up to work with her hands as well as her head; a scholar,—but that can't be helped, and is more her misfor-

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tune than her fault, seeing she is the only child of a scholar—and as I said afore, once she's a wife and a mother she'll forget it all, I'll be bound, —with a good fortune in land and house when it shall please the Lord to take her parents to himself; with eyes like poor Molly's for beauty, a colour that comes and goes on a milk-white skin, and as pretty a mouth——"

"Why, Mr. Manning, what fair lady are you describing?" asked Mr. Holdsworth, who had come quickly and suddenly upon our *tête-à-tête*, and had caught my father's last words as he entered the room.

Both my father and I felt rather abashed; it was such an odd subject for us to be talking about; but my father, like a straightforward simple man as he was, spoke out the truth.

"I've been telling Paul of Ellison's offer, and saying how good an opening it made for him——"

"I wish I'd as good," said Mr. Holdsworth. "But has the business a 'pretty mouth?'"

"You're always so full of your joking, Mr. Holdsworth," said my father. "I was going to say that if he and his cousin Phillis Holman liked to make it up between them, I would put no spoke in the wheel."

"Phillis Holman!" said Mr. Holdsworth. "Is she the daughter of the minister-farmer out at Heathbridge? Have I been helping on the course of true love by letting you go there so often? I knew nothing of it."

"There is nothing to know," said I, more annoyed than I chose to show. "There is no more true love in the case than may be between the first brother and sister you may choose to meet. I have been telling father she would never think of me; she's a great deal taller and cleverer; and I'd rather be taller and more learned than my wife when I have one."

"And it is she, then, that has the pretty mouth your father spoke about? I should think that would be an antidote to the cleverness and learning. But I ought to apologize for breaking in upon your last night; I came upon business to your father."

And then he and my father began to talk about many things that had no interest for me just then, and I began to go over again my conversation with my father. The more I thought about it the more I felt that I had spoken truly about my feelings towards Phillis Holman. I loved her dearly as a sister, but I could never fancy her as my wife. Still less could I think of her ever—yes, *condescending*, that is the word—condescending to marry me. I was roused from a reverie on what I should like my possible wife to be, by hearing my father's warm praise of the minister, as a most unusual character; how they had got back from the diameter of driving-wheels to the subject of the Holmans I could never tell; but I saw that my father's weighty praises were exciting some curiosity in Mr. Holdsworth's mind; indeed, he said, almost in a voice of reproach,—

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"Why, Paul, you never told me what kind of a fellow this minister-cousin of yours was!"

"I don't know that I found out, sir," said I. "But if I had, I don't think you'd have listened to me, as you have done to my father."

"No! most likely not, old fellow," replied Mr. Holdsworth, laughing. And again and afresh I saw what a handsome pleasant clear face his was; and though this evening I had been a bit put out with him—through his sudden coming, and his having heard my father's open-hearted confidence—my hero resumed all his empire over me by his bright merry laugh.

And if he had not resumed his old place that night, he would have done so the next day, when, after my father's departure, Mr. Holdsworth spoke about him with such just respect for his character, such ungrudging admiration of his great mechanical genius, that I was compelled to say, almost unawares,—

"Thank you, sir. I am very much obliged to you."

"Oh, you're not at all. I am only speaking the truth. Here's a Birmingham workman, self-educated, one may say—having never associated with stimulating minds, or had what advantages travel and contact with the world may be supposed to afford—working out his own thoughts into steel and iron, making a scientific name for himself—a fortune, if it pleases him to work for money—and keeping his singleness of heart, his perfect simplicity of manner; it puts me out of patience to think of my expensive schooling, my travels hither and thither, my heaps of scientific books, and I have done nothing to speak of. But it's evidently good blood; there's that Mr. Holman, that cousin of yours, made of the same stuff."

"But he's only cousin because he married my mother's second cousin," said I.

"That knocks a pretty theory on the head, and twice over, too. I should like to make Holman's acquaintance."

"I am sure they would be so glad to see you at Hope Farm," said I, eagerly. "In fact, they've asked me to bring you several times; only I thought you would find it dull."

"Not at all. I can't go yet though, even if you do get me an invitation; for the —— —— Company want me to go to the —— Valley, and look over the ground a bit for them, to see if it would do for a branch line; it's a job which may take me away for some time; but I shall be backwards and forwards, and you're quite up to doing what is needed in my absence; the only work that may be beyond you is keeping old Jevons from drinking."

He went on giving me directions about the management of the men employed on the line, and no more was said then, or for several months, about his going to Hope Farm. He went off into —— Valley, a dark overshadowed dale, where the sun seemed to set behind the hills before four o'clock on midsummer afternoon.

Perhaps it was this that brought on the attack of low fever which he had soon after the beginning of the new year; he was very ill for many

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weeks, almost many months; a married sister—his only relation, I think—came down from London to nurse him, and I went over to him when I could, to see him, and give him "masculine news," as he called it; reports of the progress of the line, which, I am glad to say, I was able to carry on in his absence, in the slow gradual way which suited the company best, while trade was in a languid state, and money dear in the market. Of course, with this occupation for my scanty leisure, I did not often go over to Hope Farm. Whenever I did go, I met with a thorough welcome; and many inquiries were made as to Holdsworth's illness, and the progress of his recovery.

At length, in June I think it was, he was sufficiently recovered to come back to his lodgings at Eltham, and resume part at least of his work. His sister, Mrs. Robinson, had been obliged to leave him some weeks before, owing to some epidemic amongst her own children. As long as I had seen Mr. Holdsworth in the rooms at the little inn at Hensleydale, where I had been accustomed to look upon him as an invalid, I had not been aware of the visible shake his fever had given to his health. But, once back in the old lodgings, where I had always seen him so buoyant, eloquent, decided, and vigorous in former days, my spirits sank at the change in one whom I had always regarded with a strong feeling of admiring affection. He sank into silence and despondency after the least exertion; he seemed as if he could not make up his mind to any action, or else that, when it was made up, he lacked strength to carry out his purpose. Of course, it was but the natural state of slow convalescence, after so sharp an illness; but, at the time, I did not know this, and perhaps I represented his state as more serious than it was to my kind relations at Hope Farm; who, in their grave, simple, eager way, immediately thought of the only help they could give.

"Bring him out here," said the minister. "Our air here is good to a proverb; the June days are fine; he may loiter away his time in the hay-field, and the sweet smells will be a balm in themselves—better than physic."

"And," said cousin Holman, scarcely waiting for her husband to finish his sentence, "tell him there is new milk and fresh eggs to be had for the asking; it's lucky Daisy has just calved, for her milk is always as good as other cow's cream; and there is the plaid room with the morning sun all streaming in."

Phillis said nothing, but looked as much interested in the project as any one. I took it up myself. I wanted them to see him; him to know them. I proposed it to him when I got home. He was too languid after the day's fatigue, to be willing to make the little exertion of going amongst strangers; and disappointed me by almost declining to accept the invitation I brought. The next morning it was different; he apologized for his ungraciousness of the night before; and told me that he would get all things in train, so as to be ready to go out with me to Hope Farm on the following Saturday.

"For you must go with me, Manning," said he; "I used to be as

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impudent a fellow as need be, and rather liked going amongst strangers, and making my way; but since my illness I am almost like a girl, and turn hot and cold with shyness, as they do, I fancy."

So it was fixed. We were to go out to Hope Farm on Saturday afternoon; and it was also understood that if the air and the life suited Mr. Holdsworth, he was to remain there for a week or ten days, doing what work he could at that end of the line, while I took his place at Eltham to the best of my ability. I grew a little nervous, as the time drew near, and wondered how the brilliant Holdsworth would agree with the quiet quaint family of the minister; how they would like him, and many of his half-foreign ways. I tried to prepare him, by telling him from time to time little things about the goings-on at Hope Farm.

"Manning," said he, "I see you don't think I am half good enough for your friends. Out with it, man."

"No," I replied, boldly. "I think you are good; but I don't know if you are quite of their kind of goodness."

"And you've found out already that there is a greater chance of disagreement between two 'kinds of goodness,' each having its own idea of right, than between a given goodness and a moderate degree of naughtiness—which last often arises from an indifference to right?"

"I don't know. I think you're talking metaphysics, and I am sure that is bad for you."

"'When a man talks to you in a way that you don't understand about a thing which he does not understand, them's metaphysics.' You remember the clown's definition, don't you, Manning?"

"No, I don't," said I. "But what I do understand is, that you must go to bed; and tell me at what time we must start to-morrow, that I may go to Hepworth, and get those letters written we were talking about this morning."

"Wait till to-morrow, and let us see what the day is like," he answered, with such languid indecision as showed me he was over-fatigued. So I went my way.

The morrow was blue and sunny, and beautiful; the very perfection of an early summer's day. Mr. Holdsworth was all impatience to be off into the country; morning had brought back his freshness of strength, and consequent eagerness to be doing. I was afraid we were going to my cousin's farm rather too early, before they would expect us; but what could I do with such a restless vehement man as Holdsworth was that morning? We came down upon the Hope Farm before the dew was off the grass on the shady side of the lane; the great house-dog was loose, basking in the sun, near the closed side door. I was surprised at this door being shut, for all summer long it was open from morning to night; but it was only on latch. I opened it, Rover watching me with half-suspicious, half-trustful eyes. The room was empty.

"I don't know where they can be," said I. "But come in and sit down while I go and look for them. You must be tired."

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"Not I. This sweet balmy air is like a thousand tonics. Besides, this room is hot, and smells of those pungent wood-ashes. What are we to do?"

"Go round to the kitchen. Betty will tell us where they are."

So we went round into the farmyard, Rover accompanying us out of a grave sense of duty. Betty was washing out her milk-pans in the cold bubbling spring-water that constantly trickled in and out of a stone trough. In such weather as this most of her kitchen-work was done out of doors.

"Eh, dear!" said she, "the minister and missus is away at Hornby! They ne'er thought of your coming so betimes! The missus had some errands to do, and she thought as she'd walk with the minister and be back by dinner-time."

"Did not they expect us to dinner?" said I.

"Well, they did, and they did not, as I may say. Missus said to me the cold lamb would do well enough if you did not come; and if you did I was to put on a chicken and some bacon to boil; and I'll go do it now, for it is hard to boil bacon enough."

"And is Phillis gone, too?" Mr. Holdsworth was making friends with Rover.

"No! She's just somewhere about. I reckon you'll find her in the kitchen-garden, getting peas."

"Let us go there," said Holdsworth, suddenly leaving off his play with the dog.

So I led the way into the kitchen-garden. It was in the first promise of a summer profuse in vegetables and fruits. Perhaps it was not so much cared for as other parts of the property; but it was more attended to than most kitchen-gardens belonging to farm-houses. There were borders of flowers along each side of the gravel walks; and there was an old sheltering wall on the north side covered with tolerably choice fruit-trees; there was a slope down to the fish-pond at the end, where there were great strawberry-beds; and raspberry-bushes and rose-bushes grew wherever there was a space; it seemed a chance which had been planted. Long rows of peas stretched at right angles from the main walk, and I saw Phillis stooping down among them, before she saw us. As soon as she heard our cranching steps on the gravel, she stood up, and shading her eyes from the sun, recognized us. She was quite still for a moment, and then came slowly towards us, blushing a little from evident shyness. I had never seen Phillis shy before.

"This is Mr. Holdsworth, Phillis," said I, as soon as I had shaken hands with her. She glanced up at him, and then looked down, more flushed than ever at his grand formality of taking his hat off and bowing; such manners had never been seen at Hope Farm before.

"Father and mother are out. They will be so sorry; you did not write, Paul, as you said you would."

"It was my fault," said Holdsworth, understanding what she meant as

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well as if she had put it more fully into words. "I have not yet given up all the privileges of an invalid; one of which is indecision. Last night, when your cousin asked me at what time we were to start, I really could not make up my mind."

Phillis seemed as if she could not make up her mind as to what to do with us. I tried to help her—

"Have you finished getting peas?" taking hold of the half-filled basket she was unconsciously holding in her hand; "or may we stay and help you?"

"If you would. But perhaps it will tire you, sir?" added she, speaking now to Holdsworth.

"Not a bit," said he. "It will carry me back twenty years in my life, when I used to gather peas in my grandfather's garden. I suppose I may eat a few as I go along?"

"Certainly, sir. But if you went to the strawberry-beds you would find some strawberries ripe, and Paul can show you where they are."

"I am afraid you distrust me. I can assure you I know the exact fulness at which peas should be gathered. I take great care not to pluck them when they are unripe. I will not be turned off, as unfit for my work."

This was a style of half-joking talk that Phillis was not accustomed to. She looked for a moment as if she would have liked to defend herself from the playful charge of distrust made against her, but she ended by not saying a word. We all plucked our peas in busy silence for the next five minutes. Then Holdsworth lifted himself up from between the rows, and said, a little wearily—

"I am afraid I must strike work. I am not as strong as I fancied myself."

Phillis was full of penitence immediately. He did, indeed, look pale; and she blamed herself for having allowed him to help her.

"It was very thoughtless of me. I did not know—I thought, perhaps, you really liked it. I ought to have offered you something to eat, sir! Oh, Paul, we have gathered quite enough; how stupid I was to forget that Mr. Holdsworth had been ill!" And in a blushing hurry she led the way towards the house. We went in, and she moved a heavy cushioned chair forwards, into which Holdsworth was only too glad to sink. Then with deft and quiet speed she brought in a little tray, wine, water, cake, home-made bread, and newly-churned butter. She stood by in some anxiety till, after bite and sup, the colour returned to Mr. Holdsworth's face, and he would fain have made us some laughing apologies for the fright he had given us. But then Phillis drew back from her innocent show of care and interest, and relapsed into the cold shyness habitual to her when she was first thrown into the company of strangers. She brought out the last week's county paper (which Mr. Holdsworth had read five days ago) and then quietly withdrew; and then he subsided into languor, leaning back and shutting his eyes as if

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he would go to sleep. I stole into the kitchen after Phillis; but she had made the round of the corner of the house outside, and I found her sitting on the horse-mount, with her basket of peas, and a basin into which she was shelling them. Rover lay at her feet, snapping now and then at the flies. I went to her, and tried to help her; but somehow the sweet crisp young peas found their way more frequently into my mouth than into the basket, while we talked together in a low tone, fearful of being overheard through the open casements of the house-place in which Holdsworth was resting.

"Don't you think him handsome?" asked I.

"Perhaps—yes—I have hardly looked at him," she replied. "But is not he very like a foreigner?"

"Yes, he cuts his hair foreign fashion," said I.

"I like an Englishman to look like an Englishman."

"I don't think he thinks about it. He says he began that way when he was in Italy, because everybody wore it so, and it is natural to keep it on in England."

"Not if he began it in Italy, because everybody there wore it so. Everybody here wears it differently."

I was a little offended with Phillis's logical fault-finding with my friend; and I determined to change the subject.

"When is your mother coming home?"

"I should think she might come any time now; but she had to go and see Mrs. Morton, who was ill, and she might be kept, and not be home till dinner. Don't you think you ought to go and see how Mr. Holdsworth is going on, Paul? He may be faint again."

I went at her bidding; but there was no need for it. Mr. Holdsworth was up, standing by the window, his hands in his pockets; he had evidently been watching us. He turned away as I entered.

"So that is the girl I found your good father planning for your wife, Paul, that evening when I interrupted you! Are you of the same coy mind still? It did not look like it a minute ago."

"Phillis and I understand each other," I replied, sturdily. "We are like brother and sister. She would not have me as a husband, if there was not another man in the world; and it would take a deal to make me think of her—as my father wishes" (somehow I did not like to say "as a wife"), "but we love each other dearly."

"Well? I am rather surprised at it—not at your loving each other in a brother-and-sister kind of way—but at your finding it so impossible to fall in love with such a beautiful woman."

Woman! beautiful woman! I had thought of Phillis as a comely but awkward girl; and I could not banish the pinafore from my mind's eye when I tried to picture her to myself. Now I turned, as Mr. Holdsworth had done, to look at her again out of the window: she had just finished her task, and was standing up, her back to us, holding the basket, and the basin in it, high in air, out of Rover's reach, who was

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giving vent to his delight at the probability of a change of place by glad leaps and barks, and snatches at what he imagined to be a withheld prize. At length she grew tired of their mutual play, and with a feint of striking him, and a "Down, Rover! do hush!" she looked towards the window where we were standing, as if to reassure herself that no one had been disturbed by the noise, and seeing us, she coloured all over, and hurried away, with Rover still curving in sinuous lines about her as she walked.

"I should like to have sketched her," said Mr. Holdsworth, as he turned away. He went back to his chair, and rested in silence for a minute or two. Then he was up again.

"I would give a good deal for a book," said he. "It would keep me quiet." He began to look round; there were a few volumes at one end of the shovel-board.

"Fifth volume of Matthew Henry's *Commentary*," said he, reading their titles aloud. "*Housewife's complete Manual; Berridge on Prayer; L'Inferno*—Dante!" in great surprise. "Why, who reads this?"

"I told you Phillis read it. Don't you remember? She knows Latin and Greek, too."

"To be sure! I remember! But somehow I never put two and two together. That quiet girl, full of household work, is the wonderful scholar, then, that put you to rout with her questions when you first began to come here. To be sure, 'Cousin Phillis!' What's here: a paper with the hard, obsolete words written out. I wonder what sort of a dictionary she has got. Baretti won't tell her all these words. Stay! I have got a pencil here. I'll write down the most accepted meanings, and save her a little trouble."

So he took her book and the paper back to the little round table, and employed himself in writing explanations and definitions of the words which had troubled her. I was not sure if he was not taking a liberty: it did not quite please me, and yet I did not know why. He had only just done, and replaced the paper in the book, and put the latter back in its place, when I heard the sound of wheels stopping in the lane, and looking out, I saw cousin Holman getting out of a neighbour's gig, making her little curtsey of acknowledgment, and then coming towards the house. I went out to meet her.

"Oh, Paul!" said she, "I am so sorry I was kept; and then Thomas Dobson said if I would wait a quarter of an hour, he would—— But where's your friend Mr. Holdsworth? I hope he is come!"

Just then he came out, and with his pleasant cordial manner took her hand, and thanked her for asking him to come out here to get strong.

"I'm sure I am very glad to see you, sir. It was the minister's thought. I took it into my head you would be dull in our quiet house, for Paul says you've been such a great traveller; but the minister said dulness would perhaps suit you while you were but ailing, and that I was to ask Paul to be here as much as he could. I hope you'll find yourself happy with us, I'm sure, sir. Has Phillis given you something

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to eat and drink, I wonder? there's a deal in eating a little often, if one has to get strong after an illness." And then she began to question him as to the details of his indisposition in her simple motherly way. He seemed at once to understand her, and to enter into friendly relations with her. It was not quite the same in the evening when the minister came home. Men have always a little natural antipathy to get over when they first meet as strangers. But in this case each was disposed to make an effort to like the other; only each was to each a specimen of an unknown class. I had to leave the Hope Farm on Sunday afternoon, as I had Mr. Holdsworth's work as well as my own to look to in Eltham; and I was not at all sure how things would go on during the week that Holdsworth was to remain on his visit; I had been once or twice in hot water already at the near clash of opinions between the minister and my much-vaunted friend. On the Wednesday I received a short note from Holdsworth; he was going to stay on, and return with me on the following Sunday, and he wanted me to send him a certain list of books, his theodolite and other surveying instruments, all of which could easily be conveyed down the line to Heathbridge. I went to his lodgings and picked out the books. Italian, Latin, trigonometry; a pretty considerable parcel they made, besides the implements. I began to be curious as to the general progress of affairs at Hope Farm, but I could not go over till the Saturday. At Heathbridge I found Holdsworth, come to meet me. He was looking quite a different man to what I had left him; embrowned, sparkles in his eyes, so languid before. I told him how much stronger he looked.

"Yes!" said he. "I am fidging fain to be at work again. Last week I dreaded the thoughts of my employment; now I am full of desire to begin. This week in the country has done wonders for me."

"You have enjoyed yourself, then?"

"Oh! it has been perfect in its way. Such a thorough country life! and yet removed from the dulness which I always used to fancy accompanied country life, by the extraordinary intelligence of the minister. I have fallen into calling him 'the minister,' like every one else."

"You get on with him, then?" said I. "I was a little afraid."

"I was on the verge of displeasing him once or twice, I fear, with random assertions and exaggerated expressions, such as one always uses with other people, and thinks nothing of; but I tried to check myself when I saw how it shocked the good man; and really it is very wholesome exercise, this trying to make one's words represent one's thoughts, instead of merely looking to their effect on others."

"Then you are quite friends now?" I asked.

"Yes, thoroughly; at any rate as far as I go. I never met with a man with such a desire for knowledge. In information, as far as it can be gained from books, he far exceeds me on most subjects; but then I have travelled and seen—— Were not you surprised at the list of things I sent for?"

"Yes! I thought it did not promise much rest."

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"Oh! some of the books were for the minister, and some for his daughter. (I call her Phillis to myself, but I use euphuisms in speaking about her to others. I don't like to seem familiar, and yet Miss Holman is a term I have never heard used.)"

"I thought the Italian books were for her."

"Yes! Fancy her trying at Dante for her first book in Italian! I had a capital novel by Manzoni, *I Promessi Sposi*, just the thing for a beginner; and if she must still puzzle out Dante, my dictionary is far better than hers."

"Then she found out you had written those definitions on her list of words?"

"Oh! yes"—with a smile of amusement and pleasure. He was going to tell me what had taken place, but checked himself.

"But I don't think the minister will like your having given her a novel to read?"

"Pooh! What can be more harmless? Why make a bugbear of a word? It is as pretty and innocent a tale as can be met with. You don't suppose they take *Virgil* for gospel?"

By this time we were at the farm. I think Phillis gave me a warmer welcome than usual, and cousin Holman was kindness itself. Yet somehow I felt as if I had lost my place, and that Holdsworth had taken it. He knew all the ways of the house; he was full of little filial attentions to cousin Holman; he treated Phillis with the affectionate condescension of an elder brother; not a bit more; not in any way different. He questioned me about the progress of affairs in Eltham with eager interest.

"Ah!" said cousin Holman, "you'll be spending a different kind of time next week to what you have done this! I can see how busy you'll make yourself! But if you don't take care you'll be ill again, and have to come back to our quiet ways of going on."

"Do you suppose I shall need to be ill to wish to come back here?" he answered, warmly. "I am only afraid you have treated me so kindly that I shall always be turning up on your hands."

"That's right," she replied. "Only don't go and make yourself ill by over-work. I hope you'll go on with a cup of new milk every morning, for I am sure that is the best medicine; and put a teaspoonful of rum in it, if you like; many a one speaks highly of that, only we had no rum in the house."

I brought with me an atmosphere of active life which I think he had begun to miss; and it was natural that he should seek my company, after his week of retirement. Once I saw Phillis looking at us as we talked together with a kind of wistful curiosity; but as soon as she caught my eye, she turned away, blushing deeply.

That evening I had a little talk with the minister. I strolled along the Hornby road to meet him; for Holdsworth was giving Phillis an Italian lesson, and cousin Holman had fallen asleep over her work.

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Somehow, and not unwillingly on my part, our talk fell on the friend whom I had introduced to the Hope Farm.

"Yes! I like him!" said the minister, weighing his words a little as he spoke. "I like him. I hope I am justified in doing it, but he takes hold of me, as it were; and I have almost been afraid lest he carries me away, in spite of my judgment."

"He is a good fellow; indeed he is," said I. "My father thinks well of him; and I have seen a deal of him. I would not have had him come here if I did not know that you would approve of him."

"Yes," (once more hesitating,) "I like him, and I think he is an upright man; there is a want of seriousness in his talk at times, but, at the same time, it is wonderful to listen to him! He makes Horace and Virgil living, instead of dead, by the stories he tells me of his sojourn in the very countries where they lived, and where to this day, he says—— But it is like dram-drinking. I listen to him till I forget my duties, and am carried off my feet. Last Sabbath evening he led us away into talk on profane subjects ill befitting the day."

By this time we were at the house, and our conversation stopped. But before the day was out, I saw the unconscious hold that my friend had got over all the family. And no wonder: he had seen so much and done so much as compared to them, and he told about it all so easily and naturally, and yet as I never heard any one else do; and his ready pencil was out in an instant to draw on scraps of paper all sorts of illustrations—modes of drawing up water in Northern Italy, wine-carts, buffaloes, stone-pines, I know not what. After we had all looked at these drawings, Phillis gathered them together, and took them.

It is many years since I have seen thee, Edward Holdsworth, but thou wast a delightful fellow! Ay, and a good one too; though much sorrow was caused by thee!

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Attempts at Classic Metres in Quantity.

By Alfred Tennyson.

TRANSLATIONS OF HOMER.

Hexameters and Pentameters.

These lame hexameters the strong-wing'd music of Homer!
No—but a most burlesque barbarous experiment.
When was a harsher sound ever heard, ye Muses, in England?
When did a frog coarser croak upon our Helicon?
Hexameters no worse than daring Germany gave us,
Barbarous experiment, barbarous hexameters!

MILTON.

Alcaics.

O mighty-mouth'd inventor of harmonies,
O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity,
God-gifted organ-voice of England,
Milton, a name to resound for ages;
Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel,
Starr'd from Jehovah's gorgeous armouries,
Tower, as the deep-domed empyrëan
Rings to the roar of an angel onset—
Me rather all that bowery loneliness,
The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring,
And bloom profuse and cedar arches
Charm, as a wanderer out in ocean,
Where some refulgent sunset of India
Streams o'er a rich ambrosial ocean isle,
And crimson-hued the stately palmwoods
Whisper in odorous heights of even.

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Hendecasyllabics.

O you chorus of indolent reviewers,
Irresponsible, indolent reviewers,
Look, I come to the test, a tiny poem
All composed in a metre of Catullus,
All in quantity, careful of my motion,
Like the skater on ice that hardly bears him,
Lest I fall unawares before the people,
Waking laughter in indolent reviewers.
Should I flounder awhile without a tumble
Thro' this metrification of Catullus,
They should speak to me not without a welcome,
All that chorus of indolent reviewers.
Hard, hard, hard is it, only not to tumble,
So fantastical is the dainty metre.
Wherefore slight me not wholly, nor believe me
Too presumptuous, indolent reviewers.
O blatant Magazines, regard me rather—
Since I blush to belaud myself a moment—
As some exquisite rose, a piece of inmost
Horticultural art, or half coquette-like
Maiden, not to be greeted unbenignly.

Some, and among these one at least of our best and greatest, have endeavoured to give us the *Iliad* in English hexameters, and by what appears to me their failure, have gone far to prove the impossibility of the task. I have long held by our blank verse in this matter, and now after having spoken so disrespectfully here of these hexameters, I venture, or rather feel bound, to subjoin a specimen, however brief and with whatever demerits, of a blank-verse translation.

He ceased, and sea-like roar'd the Trojan host,
And loosed their sweating horses from the yoke,
And each beside his chariot bound his own;
And oxen from the city and goodly sheep

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In haste they drove, and honey-hearted* wine
And bread from out the houses brought, and heap'd
Their firewood, and the winds from off the plain
Roll'd the rich vapour far into the heaven.
And these all night sat on the bridge of war
Triumphant ; many a fire before them blazed:
As when in heaven the stars about the moon
Look beautiful, when all the winds are laid,
And every height comes out, and jutting peak
And valley, and the immeasurable heavens
Break open to their highest, and all the stars
Shine, and the hind rejoices in his heart :
So many a fire between the ships and stream
Of Xanthus blazed before the towers of Troy,
A thousand on the plain ; and close by each
Sat fifty in the blaze of burning fire ;
And champing golden grain their horses stood,
† Hard by the chariots, waiting for the dawn.

Iliad 8. 542–561.

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* Or, "wine sweet to the mind," but I use this epithet simply as a synonym of "sweet."

† Or, if something like the spondaic close of the line be required,

"And waited—by their chariots—the fair dawn."

Or more literally,

"And, champing the white barley and spelt, their steeds
Stood by the cars, waiting the throned morn."

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Life in a Country House.

Dispensing and receiving hospitality in the country to the extent to which it is now carried may be classed among the institutions which have grown out of railway travelling. Distance is, now-a-days, the one thing never dreamt of as an excuse either for not inviting or for declining. In posting-days the custom used to be confined to neighbours, or if great friends came several scores of dreary miles, they were expected to remain, not days but weeks; and ladies were only just recovering from the fatigues of the journey by the time most visits of the present date are over.

From the eve of the 12th of August in the North, and of the 1st of September everywhere else, hundreds of country houses assemble frequent parties, many of which are scarcely without visitors till the beginning of the following London season. The custom is mainly confined to the British Isles; for, though it is highly appreciated by the French, Belgians, and others, the law relative to division of property will always so dwarf the majority of fortunes as to prevent it from ever figuring conspicuously as part of their social system; and the amount of wealth and prosperity which it indicates amongst us must be enormous, looking at the style in which things are done. No house where entertainment is the order of the autumn and winter months can be kept going with a less income than 10,000*l.* a year. The different degrees to which things are well or ill done depends chiefly upon whether the host or hostess (whichever happens to reign) is "understanding" and zealous, or the reverse. The scale aimed at varies but little anywhere. Smaller fortunes of, say, 4,000*l.* or 5,000*l.* a year, simply entertain fewer people, and less often; but everybody gives the same number of dishes for dinner, and champagne each day; everywhere there are carriages to drive people out, keepers in readiness, &c. &c. There are, it is true, exceptional cases, but they are rare. At W——, a bachelor, on going to dress for dinner, beholds himself reflected on every side in vast sheets of looking-glass, by the light of no fewer than eighteen wax-candles, and at K—— each married couple has a private sitting-room, which is brilliantly illuminated both at the fall of day, and again when the party breaks up at night; editions of the principal newspapers are provided for their special use, and even postage envelopes are not forgotten; but what can astonish at a place where thirteen days' first-rate cover-shooting can be had without going over an inch of ground twice?

But everywhere the main point of all is the cook, since the spirits of the guests, consequently the conversation, consequently the whole success of the party, depends thereupon. "*Le véritable Amphitrion c'est l'Amphi-*

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trion où l'on dîne," which, freely translated, means that no man deserves the name of a *host* who gives you what does not deserve the name of a *dinner*. A few romantic and *very* young people begin life with an Utopian idea that food, except in as much as regards health, is a subject quite unworthy the attention of intellectual being; in fact, that gastronomy is a degrading study. "The more the brute is snubbed," say they, "the more does the mind improve and develop; and since, do what one will, far too much of the brute remains after all, how culpable must it be wantonly to aggravate matters by pandering to a sensual and corrupt appetite?" All I can say to these young stoics is, that however well such systems may work in convents and monasteries, they are utterly inapplicable to society; for experience shows that the surest way of getting people to give *you* an intellectual treat is to give *them* a substantial and savoury one; and it is on this account that each new gastronomic discovery deserves to be hailed as a step in the march of civilization. Give people a bad dinner and they become utterly worthless; give them a good one, and they will sing, play, act charades, talk, and, above all, laugh, to any desired amount.

Railways! I thank you! I have known all the social joys of a winter in Rome, a winter in Paris, and of several London seasons, and have arrived at the conclusion that for real enjoyment of society, there is nothing like a country house. There, no tearing about from street to street, no incessant answering of notes, no endless appointments to distract the brain and ruffle the temper; but each pleasure *comes to you* in an agreeable and a peaceful routine, which is still full of variety. The more people visit, the more do they become fitted for visiting, and, accordingly, the more they enjoy it. After the first two months the novice sighs for anchorage; but drive him on a few weeks longer, and flitting from house to house becomes a second nature, and by no means an idle or unprofitable existence need it be. For example, a lady may visit nearly the whole year round, and yet frequently contrive to publish books, to keep up her music and a large correspondence, to embroider yards upon yards of tapestry, and all without the smallest sacrifice of what is due to social obligations. Such instances are known. Music, drawing, needlework, reading the papers, and even letter-writing may, to a great extent, be carried on in public.

Unless all attend a meet of hounds, or some distant expedition is decided upon, you are pretty well master of your time, with the exception of breakfast, until twelve, when it will be well to join whatever the chase or the gun may have left of the party. After lunch, everybody is expected to hold themselves at the disposal of the lady of the house, for a ride, drive, or walk, as the case may be. If the weather be such as to induce you to remain within doors, your co-operation will be sought for a game at pool, badminton (which is battledore and shuttlecock played with sides, across a string suspended some five feet from the ground), and similar amusements. At four you may again retire, if you please, until dinner-

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time. A thorough wet or snow-stormy day, when the bleakness without enhances the comfort within, often turns out to be anything but a bore, from the effect it has of keeping every one sociably in the house, and driving them to endless expedients and devices, which, although originally adopted to kill time, often end in entertaining it. When a riding-school and numerous stud are at hand, a scratch pack of musicians and riding-habits of various pretensions make their appearance, and equestrian quadrilles and lancers are gone through ; or a bar is put up, and "larked" over, as the case may be. What constitutes the great charm of this sort of life is the ever-increasing fashion of letting people do, with respect to amusing themselves, exactly as they please. Everything at the command of the host is put at the disposal of the guest, but care is taken that he shall understand he is nowise expected to take part in anything, unless perfectly agreeable to himself. "Liberty Hall" is the title almost every host wishes to gain for his house. Punctuality is of course expected at dinner, though not always at breakfast, and no one need appear at lunch unless he please.

Our young men have long since grown very impatient of being kept long in the dining-room after the fair objects of their aspirations have left; more particularly if they are not sufficiently intimate to seek consolation by confiding to each other their woes ; and it is sometimes highly diverting to note the various phases of their wretchedness, while foxes and hunters, after driving away church-rates and the bench of magistrates, succumb in their turn before pheasants' eggs and the game-laws, at the venerable end of the table. Fitz-Romeo seems trying to mesmerise by his vacant stare the topmost plum of the pyramid before him, young Love-and-Starve is lost in admiration for a flaw in the ceiling, while poor Fargone seeks diligently for a knot in the table-cloth with his right-hand, while apparently endeavouring to pull off the left half of his moustache with the other.

In theory, most men agree that fifteen or twenty minutes is ample time to sit over their wine, but alas! the theoretical twenty too often grows to a practical fifty even now-a-days, while people still living remember a time when there was no such thing as driving home after dinner, an invitation to dine being always accompanied by one to pass the night: for the potent reason that the gentlemen of the party were never expected to rejoin the ladies after the repast, but to be assisted to their rooms in various stages of oblivious happiness, far on in the small hours.

Several efforts have been made to introduce the foreign custom of the gentlemen leaving the room with the ladies, but happily without success, as there can be no doubt that both meet again with renewed pleasure after a few minutes' separation. The late Lord A., dining with Lord and Lady S. (who were about the first to make the innovation), happened to be tormented by a tight boot, and, being ignorant of the intended measure, he contrived by the aid of his other foot, and a friendly leg of the table, to draw it off. "I shall have an opportunity," thought he, "of re-booting

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after the ladies retire;" and his face beamed as he congratulated himself on his release, and on the impossibility of detection. Poor man, he was noted for getting into absurd situations! The gloves are adjusted, the signal is given (that signal which is perhaps the only one never yet met but with acquiescence), and my lord rises in his place with serene brow, but, O horror! he presently beholds the being, late his lovely charge, looking at him in a very ominous manner! A glance round the room, and the whole terrible truth flashes upon him like a thunderbolt. There is no help for it—go he must. The drawing-room is reached, unconscious beauty seats herself on an ottoman in the most conspicuous part of the room, and talks on and on without giving any signs of coming to a full stop. The wretched little peer stands fidgeting before her, and planning a speedy exit: when, just as he believes himself on the verge of accomplishing it, and is flattering himself that his black stocking has saved him from discovery, the door is flung wide open, and in comes John Thomas bearing "my lord's boot" upon a silver charger!

I have heard it argued that another foreign custom, the *déjeûner à la fourchette*, ought to be adopted in England in lieu of our present breakfast and lunch, on the ground that two regular meals a day, when the party is large, are as much as servants have properly time for; but this plan would never suit our sportsmen, and I trust the ladies would not be willing to forego their society up to dinner-time; besides, this system would necessitate so much carrying of tea, toast, &c. to the bedrooms, that it is doubtful whether much trouble would be saved by the change.

The non-sporting men of the party, if they remain entertaining (?) the ladies all day, will generally find themselves at a discount when the Nimrods return; the ungrateful fair having a surprising appetite for variety. Where shooting or hunting is to be had, those who partake in the sport are proverbially happier on a visit than their wives and daughters, and this is, in great measure, owing to a habit the latter have of all sitting too much together instead of seeking occupation in their respective rooms; for a due balance of solitude and society is nowhere more necessary to be observed than at these rural gatherings.

The country house is in itself a little world complete. There all the latest improvements of civilization are crowded together, in art, equipage, dress, gardening, cookery, and upholstery. We have in the host and his family a petty monarch, and the princes and princesses of the blood; the aristocracy is represented by the guests; valets and ladies'-maids may do duty for lords and ladies in waiting; while the tenantry around require no twisting to represent the ratepayers.

The writer of this paper was not long since confined to his room for some days by illness, at a certain popular house in the South. His windows looked out upon the vast stable-yard. It must strike foreigners that no man of us ever builds a comfortable house for himself, but he invariably follows up with a palace for his horses. It was an exhilarating

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sight to the eye of a sick man to see the five bays, in their shining harness, stamping with impatience, until the dandy postilions and outriders presently came forth, looking as if they had never done an hour's work in their lives, "and didn't intend to;" but were only going to condescend to ride, just to show how well they could do it. A few hours and they return mud-bespattered, and "all of a smoke," presently followed by other carriages that have set down new guests, and have come round to be unladen of their luggage. Lights appear in many windows, shadows flit busily by, and there is a pleasing sense of refreshment for the road-weary, and of preparation for regaling lord and valet, man and beast. O bachelors of London, sick abed! it is better to lie thus, though tantalized by not-to-be-responded-to dinner-bells, and kept awake by festive sounds, than to suffer in the undisturbed silence of your laundress's list shoe!

Owners of fine places generally appear to see as much company at home, and to go out as little themselves as they can possibly manage; and the difficulty of getting together a score of visitors, particularly at rather short notice, is often surprising; indeed, it is by no means uncommon to find that the number of *invités*, as compared with those who come, is in the ratio of four or even five to one. The grand difficulty is to get men; for what with the rich ones, whose business or pleasure keeps them at home, and what with the poor ones tied down by their various professions, the class of visiting men is chiefly confined to the few *petits rentiers* of society, the most desirable of whom are generally full of similar engagements.

La crême de la crême, when visiting in the country, is constantly being thrown with people who may be designated as only "single cream," and whom it would otherwise meet but in London crowds, and probably never happen to become acquainted with. They are invited together for various reasons, such as neighbourhood, political interest, or being hard up for company. If the single cream be charming, it has now at least the chance of being appreciated by the double cream, a chance which it might never have been blessed with in town; and many a fast friendship between some favourite of fashion and one who, while of the same or even higher rank than herself, but not in the former's exclusive set, owes its origin to some such confusion in the social dairy. But mixing company, even to a slight degree, is a dangerous expedient for all save the very gods and goddesses of fashion, since, when minor deities attempt it, cliques and dissensions are almost sure to make their appearance, and spoil the whole *agrément* of the visit; except, indeed, so far as the laughing philosopher of the party is concerned. Members of any of the four great aristocracies—Beauty, Talent, Rank, and Money—are now universally welcome, provided always that they be fine specimens.

It is certain that one gets to know what people are far better in four days at a country house than in the hurry and crowd of as many London seasons; and it is an interesting employment to analyze the

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composition of the *réunion*, to trace the amount of success attending it to the true cause, or to discover what it is that spoils the salad.

There is a gift, rare indeed to meet with, the possessor of which is apt to be little thought of by the many, and yet he is more valuable in a house than a host of otherwise accomplished and more strikingly gifted men. It is the knack, of which the owner is probably unconscious, of drawing out all the other guests, yet without seeming to do so; and of making them display their various endowments to the best advantage. This tact or knowledge of his species enables him to act like a magician even on a party of strangers, and his value is often discovered for the first time when his absence accidentally occurs. Society is, doubtless, as necessary to such a man as he is to society, yet being invariably one whose hours of retirement are amply employed, he never enters it without feeling that he is buying his enjoyment at the cost of precious time; and he is determined, if possible, to have a good return for the sacrifice. Perhaps, next to him in value, comes the man who takes the line of making himself to a certain premeditated degree a butt to the rest of the company. To do this without ever incurring their pity, which would be fatal, requires considerable sharpness. The third place may be assigned to the amusing "rattle," who is always ready to fill up any gap in the conversation.

Go where one will, and however charming the party *in* the house, the aborigines of the neighbourhood who come occasionally to dinner are, for the most part, *sauvage*, ill-dressed, and uninteresting. This applies especially to the female specimens of the class. Who is not familiar with the tall man, who, on being announced, advances up the room with a lady on each arm, one of whom wears spectacles, and is sinking into the sere and yellow, while the other is unbeautifully young? Why is the said young lady invariably robed in a nondescript white garment, with three-quarters of a yard of coloured ribbon round the place where the waist ought to be, the remaining quarter of the yard bought being split, hemmed on the frayed side, and made to do duty for ornament on the sleeves? The damsel's complexion and figure are easy of description. The former is pale wherever it should be pink, and pink wherever it should be pale; the latter is round wherever it should be flat, and flat wherever it should be round. The luckless cavalier who takes her in to dinner will find that the only result of his many efforts to get up a conversation will be that she repeats a great portion of each of his questions in her reply. "Do you often attend archery meetings, Miss Queer?" "No, I don't often attend archery meetings;" and so on. Probably, when they have departed, a discussion will arise among some of the party as to the relationship of the trio: whether the middle-aged woman was wife or sister to the tall man, and what the young one was to both?

Two of the most irritating faults a house can be marred by are children and dogs. I refer not to children who, produced for a moment in gorgeous array, and happily awed by the novelty of company, are in a

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subdued state, which renders them rather desirable fancy articles than otherwise—to have their fat cheeks well pinched, a sugar-plum stuffed into their mouths, and away with them—but when they are for ever running in and out: when, alas, they have lost their shyness, they become almost pestiferous. Dogs, though far less objectionable, are also to be condemned, because fatally apt to monopolize conversation (strange charge against dumb animals though it be), to the detriment of more interesting subjects. When it has been my fate to undergo, for days together, a constant recurrence of dog-talk, how fervently have I wished some invisible shorthand-writer were employed taking down all that had been said about Flo and Tiny during the visit; that I might, at the end, display it in black and white, to the confusion, let us hope, of the guilty ones.

Surely the few houses still without a smoking-room will not long persevere in the singularity? To be driven *bon gré mal gré* to one's bedroom, when the ladies retire, is a species of tyranny bordering on the unbearable; while being consigned to the crickets, black-beetles, and roasting blaze of the kitchen, is only one degree less horrible. Another point: If the master of the house be no smoker, let him confide to a trustworthy guest the charge of seeing lights out and all made safe for the night; but let him not come yawning and fidgeting about until the rest throw away their half-consumed cigars in sheer despair. Such unwise measures often defeat their own end by tempting men to read in bed, to bring clandestine packs of cards in their portmanteaux, and to establish secret rubbers in their rooms.

The time-honoured custom of feeing servants and gamekeepers still remains a thorn in the side, even more of the entertainers than of the entertained; as regards servants, it has been greatly modified of late years. A single man, who takes his valet with him, has no fees to give *in* the house; though if he rides, or if a carriage be ordered out solely for his use, he will be expected to give a trifle in the stables. Housemaids look for a small gratuity from ladies only. A man, visiting without his valet, must of course fee the man who waits upon him; but the following very moderate scale of payment will always be found to satisfy, except perhaps from very great gentlemen indeed, viz., for one or two nights, half-a-crown; from three nights to a week, five shillings; from that to ten days, seven shillings and sixpence; and for a fortnight, half a sovereign. A sovereign will be ample even for six weeks. Reduced within these limits, whatever may be urged against the practice, it is shorn of half its evils, and there does not appear to be any means of abolishing it, though some years ago the noble owner of A—— adopted the railway-station plan, and had written up in various parts of the house, "You are requested to give no vales to the servants."

The chief use of taking about a servant of one's own is, that he packs and unpacks for one. It is a great comfort on arriving at a house, after a long journey, to be able to spend the interval before the dressing-bell in

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chat or repose, and then to find everything laid out in one's room at the very same angles as at home; and there are few more pitiful cases than that of a young bachelor, whose head is full of other thoughts, having to devote the last hour or two of his time before leaving a house to the task of packing his own things, more particularly if he be in love, which ought always to be the case at the end of a visit; yet he can hardly allow a strange servant to do the work for him, for fear of finding his tooth-powder dispersed over his dress-coat on reaching his next destination, a not improbable contingency.

The waiting at table is most perfect at houses where none of the visitors' servants are admitted into the room, the home staff of officials being equal to all requirements. When the party is large, a proportion of one attendant to every three guests will be found sufficient.

It is much to be regretted, however, that keepers who are able to show a good head of game are becoming every year more exorbitant in their expectations. Add to this the bill habitually presented to each sportsman in Norfolk and Suffolk for shot, and at many places in the said counties for powder also, after killing, be it remembered, the host's game for him, which game is probably destined for market; add moreover the fees to loaders and beaters in cover-shooting, and it will readily be understood why many a young *fanatico* for the sport, whose means are weak as his frame is robust, is compelled to decline an invitation to good shooting quarters.

At a certain noble earl's, where nobody pays for ammunition, and everything is done *en prince*, I am told that you find on your dressing-table, before dinner, a list of what has fallen to your own gun, together with some blank labels on which you are free to write the addresses of any friends among whom you may wish to divide the whole amount you have killed.

Good reader, you surely did not expect to get through this paper without a little croquet? Where can one go now-a-days without stumbling upon that unamusing amusement?—literally *stumbling*, for one is sure to catch one's foot in those man-trappish hoops. A certain indignant friend of mine declares he would stick up a notice on his lawn (if he had one) to the effect that all persons found perpetrating croquet on the premises should be prosecuted, &c. Well, not even the seven men I supplanted in the affections of the seven Miss Roquets can accuse me of a partiality for the game: but still, intrinsically bad as croquet is as a game—grovelling on the ground as it is—are not its advantages even greater than its faults? Is it not, after all, an incentive to flirtation? And is not that, pray, a point second to none in the success of a country mustering? Whether happiness or heart-breaking be the ultimate consequence, of course nobody stops to inquire; the fun over, who cares for the victims? The very hostess who, on other occasions, inveighs most loudly against those despicable beings, incorrigible flirts, will be the first to engage "the wretches" whenever she contemplates filling her house; and, more-

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over, if she knows what she is about, she will scatter over her rooms little tables with games on them that only two can play at; unless, indeed, she has marriageable daughters of her own, which would spoil the look of the measure.

Private theatricals, when carefully got up, are to be highly commended; though it has been known to happen that, of all engaged, the only person distinctly heard by the audience from beginning to end was the prompter. The contempt of actors for amateurs sometimes shows itself in an amusing way.

"I know what you amateurs are," said a professional to me once. "You all think more of your get-up than anything else. Ugh! Ridiculous! to see one great booby going up to another with: 'Oh! how nice you do look, to be sure! How do you think I look?'"

I could not help feeling the truth of the remark.

A permanent theatre certainly takes up a vast deal of room in a house, and temporary ones are seldom satisfactory. At S—— the theatre has a floor constructed with a view to dancing, and makes an admirable ball-room. When used for this purpose a *buffet*, behind which is a gay landscape scene, occupies the front of the stage. At an appointed hour this is dismantled and removed, the scene is drawn up, discovering a Gothic apartment, fitted up with armour, in which supper is tastefully laid out *à la* Lucrezia Borgia; chairs are brought to the place usually occupied by the orchestra, and the edge of the stage is used as a table, the servants alone being on the stage. The effect is as novel as it is charming.

How highly good musical talent is appreciated at country-house gatherings! If a fine tenor or soprano voice be discovered among the party, how the gifted owner is coaxed and entreated for one more, and just one more, until the "flattering unction" laid to the performer's soul is only equalled by the corresponding rawness of his or her throat. But amateur thrushes and nightingales are among the rarest of birds, nor are good pianoforte players much easier to meet with; indeed, the great majority of players have all the same harsh, disagreeable, reposeless style. When a new performer is requested to sit down to the piano, there is often a moment of courteous silence; but it is a fact that at the very first slight mistake she makes—whether false note, hesitation, or slur, some one is certain to turn to his neighbour, and, without in the least knowing why, to start some topic of conversation. The charm is broken, the interest gone, and the signal given for general chat, which, from beginning in a whisper, grows with the first *crescendo* of the player, and the efforts of the two to drown each other become gradually "fiercer and more fierce," until the final "crash-bang" puts an end to a performance which, musically speaking, ought never to have begun, though, if the object was merely to give a fillip to the conversation, then—*à la bonheur:* there is not a word to be said—the end is amply attained.

And now for a word on gentlemen's evening dress. Why does not the fashion of dressing for dinner in knickerbockers, already so much in

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vogue, *dans l'intimité*, in the country, become general? Last season in London there were several sets of knickerbocker quadrilles at the Caledonian ball, and several of those who took part in them went on to another ball or two in their new attire. Some even appeared in it the following night; but, spite of all efforts made by a few, the "movement" fell to the ground. And why? The real reason will probably be found in the fact that no coat has yet been invented which, while in keeping with the knickerbockers, shall yet avoid the character of a lounging-jacket.

But the commendable and deep-rooted love of *tenue* is, happily, not quite dead within us even now. The neat shoe and silk stocking surely render knickerbockers a far more appropriate dress in which to appear in a ladies' ball-room, than—than—what they replace, and the present garment is certainly a prodigious anomaly as regards dancing. But reform is needed from head to heel. How greatly would a picturesque costume for men enhance the effect of those noble old rooms with embossed ceilings, oak panels and stained windows, in which England is still so rich! Our present hideous dress makes downright eyesores of us whenever we venture within the charmed precincts where fine taste has left its magic spell.

Although visiting in the country may be the most enjoyable form of social life to the initiated, yet the vicissitudes to which the novice is exposed will appear from the following, which befel a young churchman, whose knowledge of society was confined to Cambridge. Appointed to a rural curacy, and his future abode not being quite ready for his reception, he was invited by the lord of the manor to spend the interim at the house of the latter, which was to be full of company at the time. When our hero reached his destination, he was ushered into a drawing-room where were many ladies, and greeted by the mistress of the house.

Yawning with hunger, he marvelled why nothing more substantial was offered to him by way of refreshment after his journey than some tea, of which the fair band were then partaking, and some very thin bread-and-butter. "Oh!" thinks he, "people eat so heartily at their early country dinners, I suppose they can't get up fresh appetites by tea-time." Presently one lady leaves the room, soon followed by a second and a third; and in a few minutes he is left alone, with the information that he will be conducted to his apartment whenever he shall please to ring the bell. "Well," says he to himself, "this is a strange welcome certainly, but doubtless they keep pristine hours in the country, and men are so exhausted by hunting or shooting, that they are glad to retire early: I shall see them to-morrow." So, finding there is nothing for it, he rings the bell and betakes him to his room.

He had not been asleep long, before he was startled into consciousness by a tremendous ringing. His course of action is instantly decided upon, and he rushes into the passage, *as he is*, screaming "Fire!" at the top of his voice, just as all the ladies are sweeping by, full-dress for dinner!

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An Historical Mystery.

Within a short walk of Dresden lies a pretty valley, the Plauensche Grund by name. At the end of the valley, the little river Weisseritz running close to it, stands a gloomy haunted mansion, called the Plauen Palais. No window of the house has been allowed to admit the light of day for nearly thirty years—closed, barred, and secured by outside shutters of the most complicated description, the house remains at this moment, as it has done for these long years, impervious to the light of day. Walls surround the Plauen Palais, and these walls are painted black; the shutters and the iron bars, and every moulding and cornice are black also—the house itself is of a deep dingy ochre colour, and the roof of a murky red. Wild trees, some of them large full-grown oaks, others of a younger date springing up between them, hem the mansion round, and choke up the garden, while creeping plants of almost preternatural luxuriance throw themselves over the black walls, and rest on the sluggish waters of the Weisseritz below.

Beyond the walls on one side lie the gardens of an adjoining Restaurant, which itself has a haunted look. They partake of the gloomy characteristics of the Plauen Palais; the fountains are broken and defaced, the walks ill-kept, and shaded by trees running to waste; the ground swampy; but there is a small door in the wall between the gardens and those of the Plauen Palais, and for years the inhabitants of this Restaurant have heard strange sounds proceeding from the Palais, and have seen many lights gleaming through the bars of its gloomy shutters. And these lights are still to be seen even in the daytime, although the thirty years' denizen of the dark abode has passed to her last account. Still the shutters and windows remain closed, and still the strange trampling noises issue at night from the garden.

Suppose at this time last year we could have penetrated into the interior of the Plauen Palais—could we have passed the guard of men who watched inside by night, and the guard of fierce hounds who lay in the passages leading to the apartment of the mistress of the mansion—what should we have found? What should we have seen in that apartment where the ancient Gräfin is sitting? She is old—very old; but the eyes are still bright—none of their intelligence is lost, and yet there is a displeasing acuteness, and entire want of softness in their glance; it would seem as if, the outward objects of life so long shut out from view, their restless gaze turned eagerly inward to the memories of long-past years. There is intellect in the face, and abundance of power, and if the beauty

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which was once so remarkable no longer lingers there, it is because its softening lines have year by year been effaced by the force and pressure of an indomitable will. She wears a white cap suitable to her years, but of no modern fashion; her dress is a mixture of black and grey, loosely wrapping her figure and concealing its proportions. But what is that encircling her neck? Can it be a rope? It is a rope—the ends are hidden in her dress. And who is that man, his face masked, who enters unbidden her apartment? He bows lowly, without speaking; he approaches the ancient lady: he looks for a moment—it is enough; he retires, bowing as before.—— Can this be the executioner from Dresden? It is so: every week he comes, to see if the terrible sign of justice unfulfilled remains where it was placed many many years ago. Is this true, we ask? It is one of the mysteries of the Plauen Palais.

Common and scanty is the furniture of the apartment, but there is much that is curious to be found there. There are piles of MSS. written in the French language—she is adding the finishing pages to the story of the last eighty-six years gone by. It is finished; and she inscribes on it a solemn injunction that the contents of the MSS. are not to be given to the public, until fifty years after her own decease.

She has been twice married, but no portraits of either of her husbands hang there to cheer the gloomy apartment; there is, however, on the table a beautiful miniature in its rich case. Whose are those Italian features which lie on the ivory, in calm, majestic beauty and repose? They are chiselled features of the great Emperor—Napoleon the First. Whose is the face of that lovely child in that second miniature painted by the same matchless hand? Whose are the fair bright locks which are plaited thickly at the back of the miniature? Doubtless the face and hair of a beloved lost child. No: the face is that of the young king of Rome—the bright locks, undimmed by time, were cut from his sunny hair fifty years before.

Both the miniatures are by Isabey, and were the gift of the great Emperor, before the star of his glory was dimmed in the disastrous campaign of Russia. The aged Gräfin looks on the picture of the Emperor and utters,—"*Etoile de ma vie!*" He had been to her the star of her existence.

Her thoughts, as she looks down on her homely grey robes, revert to the Palace of St. Cloud, where, dazzling in beauty, splendid in talent, she was presented in an attire and a blaze of jewels which, together with a long train of luxuries, obliged her to alienate a considerable portion of the property left her by her father. One more glance she gives to the lovely childish face of the miniature, and her thoughts suddenly rush forward from St. Cloud and its brilliant court to the events of the year 1830. Is it possible that she then conspired, supported by a considerable party in France, to carry off the Duke of Reichstadt from Vienna, and have him proclaimed Emperor of the French? It was so; and upon that she

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thinks, and of her journey to Vienna, when, the plot being discovered, she was brought back, under a military escort, to Dresden. The year after, 1831, the Duke of Reichstadt died. Life had no longer any interest for her, and she retreated, not only from the world, but from the light of day.

Her memory wanders back to the time when a young son was born to her, about the time of the Russian campaign. She cannot but remember him, for her mind is strong and perfect. Where has he been ever since? Has she any miniature of him, to place side by side with that of the King of Rome? No. And what are her thoughts about him? We cannot tell that; this, too, is one of the mysteries of the Plauen Palais, shrouded in impenetrable darkness. And yet he lives—even in Dresden he lives—his occupations are menial, his face is the counterpart of the great Emperor's, and he calls himself Napoleon Buonaparte. Is it true that, supplied with money by the Saxon ambassador, he went in 1852 to Paris, to prosecute a claim as son of the late Emperor Napoleon I.—that his claim was not altogether repudiated by the then President of the Republic—that as he stood on the esplanade of the Hôtel des Invalides, witnessing the last honours paid to the memory of Marshal Soult, a gentleman put into his hand a card of introduction to the Minister Morny, adding in words, that he would receive from him a permission to visit the tomb of his father, thus fulfilling his earnest wish,—that he did receive permission, and did visit the tomb of the first Napoleon? He has appealed to the King of Saxony to be present when the Gräfin's will is read.

Her thoughts go back to the mysterious Heinrich, living as he has always lived for fifty years—transferred, when the estate of D——— was sold by herself, and again when it passed into other hands, like a serf from one owner to another—absolved from military service as incapable—apprenticed to a cooper—discharged as incapable of learning the trade,—employed by the purchasers of the estate as an errand-boy. The resemblance to herself is striking—she knows that he is looked upon as her son, and, for some cause or other, she sends him a small pittance in thalers for his subsistence. Does this balance the account in the strange hard mind of this eccentric woman? Has she no affections except for him who was "l'étoile de sa vie?"

Beyond the time of the great Emperor, she goes back in thought to her second husband, whose name she yet bears, and from whom she was divorced in 1813. When she departed from his house, did she leave behind her a young daughter? It is not improbable. Further back, her thoughts revert to her first husband, to whom—the young Graf zu L———she was married, at nineteen, in all the fresh bloom of her beauty and talents. Does she see in vision his young life cut off at the age of twenty-seven? Is there any connection between the rope which encircles her neck and the event of the 1st of August, 1800, when the Graf is said to have eaten a cherry cake which she had prepared, and, almost immediately

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after, died? We cannot solve that mystery; but that also is believed to be true. We hope not. Was there a young son of the Graf zu L——? It appears probable, for the Plauen Palais is at this moment in possession, by police force, of his grandson.

Amid the crowd of dark recollections, does she also turn back to a time when she abjured the Lutheran faith of her family, and entered the Roman Church? It is believed that she has done so, and that she has left her property to the Church. This is one of the mysteries of the Plauen Palais. It is not unlikely that she rests on this step as an atonement for her strange deeds. She has confessed the dark passages of her existence, and thus got rid of some of its burden.

But now, at eighty, the review of life is over, and whatever may have been her griefs, her regrets, her reflections on the past, the old leaven of the great world of former days is not all gone. She is quite aware of her own value as the mysterious lady of the Plauen Palais. She leaves her dark abode one day in an old worn-out droska, and proceeds to the studio of the celebrated photographer, Herr Krone, in the Friederich's Allée. Dressed in her usual grey attire, and her white cap, she has her likeness taken, and she tells the artist that after she is gone, he will reap a rich harvest by her portrait.

She returns to her dark abode, and in a very few months she is on her death-bed. A female figure, elegant but plain in dress to conventual plainness, is seen in the chamber bending over the bed. Can this be the daughter of her second husband, the Count K——? To her the ancient Gräfin talks of her wilful chequered life; and even at that last hour of existence, she speaks of him, "l'etoile de sa vie," the great Napoleon, now lying in his grave nearly forty years.

A few of the heroes of Wagram and Austerlitz yet linger on sunny mornings on the esplanade of the Hôtel des Invalides, but how soon "the wave of time, returning hoarse, will sweep them from the strand!" Jerome, the last of the old race, is gone; Montholon with his "*fidélité du chien*," as the French were wont to call it, is gone; and now, too, this strange link between the present and the past is broken. We may look on, and contemplate with wonder, the spectacle of singular enduring devotion from one strong unscrupulous mind, to another mind, strong, great, and unscrupulous also.

On the 26th of April in this year died the Gräfin K—— within a few days of completing her eighty-sixth year. On the 28th of the same month her body was placed in a simple hearse; lonely and unattended, she was taken from the Plauen Palais, and solitary in death, as in life, she was buried in the Friederichstädter Kirchof.

Some years ago, portions of this singular story of German romance were floating about the world, and though forgotten by some, others remember well the name of the heroine, the history of her first husband, and of the rope, which, in their edition, was said to have been twisted of silk and silver cords. It is a name not entirely unknown in the annals

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of our history. It came into England with the House of Hanover, and to an individual of the family we are as a nation indebted for our hitherto exclusive possession of the musical glories of Handel. When the then King was angry that Handel would not be his Capellmeister at Hanover, and forbade him his presence, a distinguished member of the House of K—— suggested to him that he should compose some music to be performed during an excursion his Majesty was about to make on the Thames. Handel wrote his well-known Water Music. The King was charmed, and appeased, and the great musician was thenceforward established in England. Another member of the family led the Hanoverian horse at Waterloo against the Gräfin's idol, thus unconsciously, as it were, performing for his family the part of an avenging Nemesis.

The name has also formed a theme for poetry—but it may be well believed that the young lady celebrated by Hood was no relative of the family.

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My Maiden Brief.

LATE on a certain May morning, as I was sitting at a modest breakfast in my "residence chambers," Pump Court, Temple, my attention was claimed by a single knock at an outer door, common to the chambers of Felix Polter, and of myself, Horace Penditton, both barrristers-at-law of the Inner Temple.

The outer door was not the only article common to Polter and myself. We also shared what Polter (who wrote farces) was pleased to term a "property" clerk, who did nothing at all, and a "practicable" laundress, who did everything. There existed also a communion of interest in tea-cups, razors, gridirons, candlesticks, &c.; for although neither of us was particularly well supplied with the necessaries of domestic life, each happened to possess the very articles in which the other was deficient. So we got on uncommonly well together, each regarding his friend in the light of an indispensable other self. We had both embraced the "higher walk" of the legal profession, and were patiently waiting for the legal profession to embrace us.

The single knock raised some well-founded apprehensions in both our minds.

"Walker!" said I to the property clerk.

"Sir!"

"If that knock is for me, I'm out, you know."

"Of course, sir!"

"And Walker!" cried Polter.

"Sir!"

"If it's for me, I'm not at home!"

Polter always rejoiced if he could manage to make the conversation partake of a Maddisonian Mortonic character.

Mr. Walker opened the door. "Mr. Penditton's a-breakfasting with the Master of the Rolls, if it's him you want; and if it isn't, Mr. Polter's with the Attorney-General."

"You don't say so!" remarked the visitor; "then p'raps you'll give this to Mr. Penditton, as soon as the Master can make up his mind to part with him."

And, so saying, he handed to Walker a lovely parcel of brief-paper, tied up neatly with a piece of red tape, and minuted—

"Central Criminal Court, May Sessions, 1860.—The Queen on the prosecution of Ann Back *v.* Elizabeth Briggs. Brief for the prisoner. Mr. Penditton, one guinea.—Poddle and Shaddery, Hans Place."

So it had come at last! Only an Old Bailey brief, it is true; but

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still a brief. We scarcely knew what to make of it. Polter looked at me, and I looked at Polter, and then we both looked at the brief.

It turned out to be a charge against Elizabeth Briggs, widow, of picking pockets in an omnibus. It appeared from my "instructions" that my client was an elderly lady, and religious. On the 2nd April then last she entered an Islington omnibus, with the view of attending a tea and prayer meeting in Bell Court, Islington. A woman in the omnibus missed her purse, and accused Mrs. Briggs, who sat on her right, of having stolen it. The poor soul, speechless with horror at the charge, was dragged out of the omnibus, and as the purse was found in a pocket on the left-hand side of her dress, she was given into custody. As it was stated by the police that she had been "in trouble" before, the infatuated magistrate who examined her committed her for trial.

"There, my boy, your fortune's made!" said Polter.

"But I don't see the use of my taking it," said I; "there's nothing to be said for her."

"Not take it? Won't you, though? I'll see about that. You *shall* take it, and you shall get her off, too! Highly respectable old lady—attentive member of well-known congregation—parson to speak to her character, no doubt. As honest as you are!"

"But the purse was found upon her!"

"Well, sir, and what of that? Poor woman left-handed, and pocket in left of dress. Robbed woman right-handed, and pocket in right of dress. Poor woman sat on right of robbed woman. Robbed woman, replacing her purse, slipped it accidentally into poor woman's pocket. Ample folds of dress, you know—crinolines overlapping, and all that. Splendid defence for you!"

"Well, but she's an old hand, it seems. The police know her."

"Police always do. 'Always know everybody'—police maxim. Swear anything, they will."

Polter really seemed so sanguine about it that I began to look at the case hopefully, and to think that something might be done with it. He talked to me to such effect that he not only convinced me that there was a good deal to be said in Mrs. Briggs's favour, but I actually began to look upon her as an innocent victim of circumstantial evidence, and determined that no effort should be wanting on my part to procure her release from a degrading but unmerited confinement.

Of the firm of Poddle and Shaddery I knew nothing whatever, and how they came to entrust Mrs. Briggs's case to me I can form no conception. As we (for Polter took so deep a personal interest in the success of Mrs. Briggs's case that he completely identified himself, in my mind, with her fallen fortunes) resolved to go to work in a thoroughly businesslike manner, we determined to commence operations by searching for the firm of Poddle and Shaddery in the *Law List*. To our dismay the *Law List* of that year had no record of Poddle, neither did Shaddery find a place in its pages. This was serious, and Polter did not

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improve matters by suddenly recollecting that he had once heard an old Q.C. say that, as a rule, the farther west of Temple Bar, the shadier the attorney; so that assuming Polter's friend to have come to a correct conclusion on this point, a firm dating officially from Hans Place, and whose name did not appear in Mr. Dalbiac's *Law List*, was a legitimate object of suspicion. But Polter, who took a hopeful view of anything which he thought might lead to good farce "situations," and who probably imagined that my first appearance on any stage as counsel for the defence was likely to be rich in suggestions, remarked that they might possibly have been certificated since the publication of the last *Law List;* and as for the *dictum* about Temple Bar, why, the case of Poddle and Shaddery might be one of those very exceptions whose existence is necessary to the proof of every general rule. So Polter and I determined to treat the firm in a spirit of charity, and accept their brief.

As the May sessions of Oyer and Terminer did not commence until the 8th, I had four clear days in which to study my brief and prepare my defence. Besides, there was a murder case, and a desperate burglary or two, which would probably be taken first, so that it was unlikely that the case of the poor soul whose cause I had espoused would be tried before the 12th. So I had plenty of time to master what Polter and I agreed was one of the most painful cases of circumstantial evidence ever submitted to a British jury; and I really believe that, by the first day of the May sessions, I was intimately acquainted with the details of every case of pocket-picking reported in *Cox's Criminal Cases* and *Buckler's Short-hand Reports.*

On the night of the 11th I asked Bodger of Brazenose, Norton of Gray's Inn, Cadbury of the Lancers, and three or four other men, college chums principally, to drop in at Pump Court, and hear a rehearsal of my speech for the defence, in the forthcoming *cause célèbre* of the Queen on the prosecution of Ann Back *v.* Elizabeth Briggs. At nine o'clock they began to appear, and by ten all were assembled. Pipes and strong waters were produced, and Norton of Gray's was forthwith raised to the Bench by the style and dignity of Sir Joseph Norton, one of the barons of her Majesty's Court of Exchequer; Cadbury, Bodger, and another represented the jury; Wilkinson of Lincoln's Inn was counsel for the prosecution, Polter was clerk of arraigns, and Walker, my clerk, was the prosecutrix.

Everything went satisfactorily: Wilkinson broke down in his speech for the prosecution; his witness prevaricated and contradicted himself in a preposterous manner; and my speech for the defence was voted to be one of the most masterly specimens of forensic ingenuity that had ever come before the notice of the court; and the consequence was, that the prisoner (inadequately represented by a statuette of the Greek Slave) was discharged, and Norton (who would have looked more like a Baron of the Exchequer if he had looked less like a tipsy churchwarden) remarked that she left the court without a stain upon her character.

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The court then adjourned for refreshment, and the conversation took a general turn, after canvassing the respective merits of "May it please your ludship," and "May it please you, my lud," as an introduction to a counsel's speech—a discussion which terminated in favour of the latter form, as being a trifle more independent in its character. I remember proposing that the health of Elizabeth Briggs should be drunk in a solemn and respectful bumper; and as the evening wore on, I am afraid I became exceedingly indignant with Cadbury because he had taken the liberty of holding up to public ridicule an imaginary (and highly undignified) *carte de visite* of my unfortunate client.

The 12th May, big with the fate of Penditton and of Briggs, dawned in the usual manner. At ten o'clock Polter and I drove up in wigs and gowns to the Old Bailey; as well because we kept those imposing garments at our chambers, not having any use for them elsewhere, as to impress passers-by, and the loungers below the court, with a conviction that we were not merely Old Bailey counsel, but had come down from our usual sphere of action at Westminster, to conduct a case of more than ordinary complication. Impressed with a sense of the propriety of presenting an accurate professional appearance, I had taken remarkable pains with my toilette. I had the previous morning shaved off a flourishing moustache, and sent Walker out for half-a-dozen serious collars, as substitutes for the unprofessional "lay-downs" I usually wore. I was dressed in a correct evening suit, and wore a pair of thin gold spectacles, and Polter remarked, that I looked the sucking bencher to the life. Polter, whose interest in the accuracy of my "get up" was almost fatherly, had totally neglected his own; and he made his appearance in the raggedest of beards and moustaches under his wig, and the sloppiest of cheap drab lounging-coats under his gown.

I modestly took my place in the back row of the seats allotted to the bar; Polter took his in the very front, in order to have an opportunity, at the close of the case, of telling the leading counsel, in the hearing of the attorneys, the name and address of the young and rising barrister who had just electrified the court. In various parts of the building I detected Cadbury, Wilkinson, and others, who had represented judge, jury, and counsel, on the previous evening. They had been instructed by Polter (who had had some experience in "packing" a house) to distribute themselves about the court, and, at the termination of the speech for the defence, to give vent to their feelings in that applause which is always so quickly suppressed by the officers of a court of justice. I was rather annoyed at this, as I did not consider it altogether legitimate; and my annoyance was immensely increased when I found that my three elderly maiden aunts, to whom I had been foolish enough to confide the fact of my having to appear on the 12th, were seated in state in that portion of the court allotted to friends of the bench and bar, and busied themselves by informing everybody within whisper-shot, that I was to defend Elizabeth Briggs, and that this was my first brief. It was some little consolation,

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however, to find that the unceremonious manner in which the facts of the cases that preceded mine were explained and commented upon by judge, jury, and counsel, caused those ladies great uneasiness, and indeed compelled them, on one or two occasions, to beat an unceremonious retreat.

At length the clerk of arraigns called the case of Briggs, and with my heart in my mouth I began to try to recollect the opening words of my speech for the defence, but I was interrupted in that hopeless task by the appearance of Elizabeth in the dock.

She was a pale, elderly widow, rather buxom, and remarkably neatly dressed, in slightly rusty mourning. Her hair was arranged in two sausage curls, one on each side of her head, and looped in two festoons over the forehead. She appeared to feel her position acutely, and although she did not weep, her red eyes showed evident traces of recent tears. She grasped the edge of the dock and rocked backwards and forwards, accompanying the motion with a low moaning sound, that was extremely touching. Polter looked back at me with an expression which plainly said, "If ever an innocent woman appeared in that dock, that woman is Elizabeth Briggs!"

The clerk of arraigns now proceeded to charge the jury. "Gentlemen of the jury, the prisoner at the bar, Elizabeth Briggs, is indicted for that she did, on the 2nd April last, steal from the person of Ann Back a purse containing ten shillings and fourpence, the moneys of the said Ann Back. There is another count to the indictment, charging her with having received the same, knowing it to have been stolen. To both of these counts the prisoner has pleaded 'Not guilty,' and it is your charge to try whether she is guilty or not guilty." Then to the bar, "Who appears in this case?"

Nobody replying in behalf of the crown, I rose and remarked that I appeared for the defence.

A counsel here said that he believed the brief for the prosecution was entrusted to Mr. Porter, but that that gentleman was engaged at the Middlesex Sessions, in a case which was likely to occupy several hours, and that he (Mr. Porter) did not expect that Briggs's case would come on that day.

A consultation then took place between the judge and the clerk of arraigns. At its termination, the latter functionary said, "Who is the junior counsel present?"

To my horror, up jumped Polter, and said, "I think it's very likely that I am the junior counsel in court. My name is Polter, and I was only called last term!"

A titter ran through the crowd, but Polter, whose least fault was bashfulness, only smiled benignly at those around him.

Another whispering between judge and clerk. At its conclusion, the clerk handed a bundle of papers to Polter, saying, at the same time,

"Mr. Polter, his lordship wishes you to conduct the prosecution."

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"Certainly," said Polter; and he opened the papers, glanced at them, and rose to address the court.

He began by requesting that the jury would take into consideration the fact that he had only that moment been placed in possession of the brief for the prosecution of the prisoner at the bar, who appeared, from what he could gather from a glance at his instructions, to have been guilty of as heartless a robbery as ever disgraced humanity. He would endeavour to do his duty, but he feared that, at so short a notice, he should scarcely be able to do justice to the brief with which he had been most unexpectedly entrusted. He then went on to state the case in a masterly manner, appearing to gather the facts, with which, of course, he was perfectly intimate, from the papers in his hand. He commented on the growing frequency of omnibus robberies, and then went on to say:—

"Gentlemen, I am at no loss to anticipate the defence on which my learned friend will base his hope of inducing you to acquit that wretched woman. I don't know whether it has ever been your misfortune to try criminal cases before, but if it has, you will be able to anticipate his defence as certainly as I can. He will probably tell you, because the purse was found in the left-hand pocket of that miserable woman's dress, that she is left-handed, and on that account wears her pocket on the left side, and he will then, if I am not very much mistaken, ask the prosecutrix if she is not right-handed, and, lastly, he will ask you to believe that the prosecutrix, sitting on the prisoner's left, slipped the purse accidentally into the prisoner's pocket. But, gentlemen, I need not remind you that the facts of these omnibus robberies are always identical. The prisoner always *is* left-handed, the prosecutrix always *is* right-handed, and the prosecutrix always *does* slip the purse accidentally into the prisoner's pocket, instead of her own. My lord will tell you that this is so, and you will know how much faith to place upon such a defence, should my friend think proper to set it up." He ended by entreating the jury to give the case their attentive consideration, and stated that he relied confidently on an immediate verdict of "Guilty." He then sat down, saying to the usher, "Call Ann Back."

Ann Back, who was in court, shuffled up into the witness-box and was duly sworn. Polter then drew out her evidence bit by bit, helping her with leading questions of the most flagrant description. I knew that I ought not to allow this, but I was too horrified at the turn matters had taken to interfere. At the conclusion of the examination in chief Polter sat down triumphantly, and I rose to cross-examine.

"You are right-handed, Mrs. Back?" (*Laughter.*)

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"Very good. I've nothing else to ask you."

So Mrs. Back stood down, and the omnibus conductor took her place. His evidence was not material, and I declined to cross-examine. The policeman who had charge of the case followed the conductor, and his evidence was to the effect that the purse was found in her pocket.

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I felt that this witness ought to be cross-examined, but not having anything ready, I allowed him to stand down. A question, I am sorry to say, then occurred to me, and I requested his lordship to allow the witness to be recalled.

"You say you found the purse in her pocket, my man?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you find anything else?"

"Yes, sir."

"What?"

"Two other purses, a watch with the bow broken, three handkerchiefs, two silver pencil-cases, and a hymn-book." (*Roars of laughter.*)

"You may stand down."

"That is the case, my lord," said Polter.

It was now my turn to address the court. What could I say? I believe I observed, that, undeterred by my learned friend's opening speech, I *did* intend to set up the defence he had anticipated. I set it up, but I don't think it did much good. The jury, who were perfectly well aware that this was Polter's first case, had no idea but that I was an old hand at it; and no doubt thought me an uncommonly clumsy one. They had made every allowance for Polter, who needed nothing of the kind, and they made none at all for me, who needed all they had at their disposal. I soon relinquished my original line of defence, and endeavoured to influence the jury by vehement assertions of my personal conviction of the prisoner's innocence. I warmed with my subject, for Polter had not anticipated me here, and I believe I grew really eloquent. I think I staked my professional reputation on her innocence, and I sat down expressing my confidence in a verdict that would restore the unfortunate lady to a circle of private friends, several of whom were waiting in the court below to testify to her excellent character.

"Call witnesses to Mrs. Briggs's character," said I.

"Witnesses to the character of Briggs!" shouted the crier.

The cry was repeated three or four times outside the court; but there was no response.

"No witnesses to Briggs's character here, my lord!" said the crier.

Of course I knew this very well; but it sounded respectable to expect them.

"Dear, dear," said I, "this is really most unfortunate. They must have mistaken the day."

"Shouldn't wonder," observed Polter, rather drily.

I was not altogether sorry that I had no witnesses to adduce, as I am afraid that they would scarcely have borne the test of Polter's cross-examination. Besides, if I had examined witnesses for the defence, Polter would have been entitled to a reply, of which privilege he would, I was sure, avail himself.

Mr. Baron Bounderby proceeded to sum up, grossly against the prisoner, as I then thought, but, as I have since had reason to believe, most

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impartially. He went carefully over the evidence, and told the jury that if they believed the witnesses for the prosecution, they should find the prisoner guilty, and if they did not—why, they should acquit her. The jury were then directed by the crier to "consider their verdict," which they couldn't possibly have done, for they immediately returned a verdict of "Guilty." The prisoner not having anything to say in arrest of judgment, the learned judge proceeded to pronounce sentence—inquiring, first of all, whether anything was known about her?

A policeman stepped forward, and stated that she had been twice convicted at this court of felony, and once at the Middlesex Sessions.

Mr. Baron Bounderby, addressing the prisoner, told her that she had been most properly convicted, on the clearest possible evidence; that she was an accomplished thief, and a most dangerous one; and that the sentence of the court was that she be imprisoned and kept to hard labour for the space of eighteen calendar months.

No sooner had the learned judge pronounced this sentence than the poor soul stooped down, and taking off a heavy boot, flung it at my head, as a reward for my eloquence on her behalf; accompanying the assault with a torrent of invective against my abilities as a counsel, and my line of defence. The language in which her oration was couched was perfectly shocking. The boot missed me, but hit a reporter on the head, and to this fact I am disposed to attribute the unfavourable light in which my speech for the defence was placed in two or three of the leading daily papers next morning. I hurried out of court as quickly as I could, and, hailing a Hansom, I dashed back to chambers, pitched my wig at a bust of Lord Brougham, bowled over Mrs. Briggs's prototype with my gown, packed up, and started that evening for the West coast of Cornwall. Polter, on the other hand, remained in town, and got plenty of business in that and the ensuing session, and afterwards on circuit. He is now a flourishing Old Bailey counsel, while I am as briefless as ever.

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On the Stage.

THINGS dramatic and things theatrical are often confounded together in the minds of English people, who, being for the most part neither the one nor the other, speak and write of them as if they were identical, instead of, as they are, so dissimilar that they are nearly opposite.

That which is dramatic in human nature is the passionate emotional humorous element, the simplest portion of our composition, after our mere instincts, to which it is closely allied, and this has no relation whatever, beyond its momentary excitement and gratification, to that which imitates it, and is its theatrical reproduction; the dramatic is the *real*, of which the theatrical is the *false*.

Both nations and individuals in whom the dramatic temperament strongly preponderates are rather remarkable for a certain vivid simplicity of nature, which produces sincerity and vehemence of emotion and expression, but is entirely without the *consciousness* which is never absent from the theatrical element.

Children are always dramatic, but only theatrical when they become aware that they are objects of admiring attention; in which case the assuming and dissembling capacity of *acting* develops itself comically and sadly enough in them.

The Italians, nationally and individually, are dramatic; the French, on the contrary, theatrical; we English of the present day are neither the one nor the other, though our possession of the noblest dramatic literature in the world proves how deeply at one time our national character was imbued with elements which are now so latent as almost to be of doubtful existence; while, on the other hand, our American progeny are, as a nation, devoid of the dramatic element, and have a considerable infusion of that which is theatrical, delighting, like the Athenians of old, in processions, shows, speeches, oratory, demonstrations, celebrations, and declarations, and such displays of public and private sentiment as would be repugnant to English taste and feeling; to which theatrical tendency, and the morbid love of excitement which is akin to it, I attribute the fact that Americans, both nationally and individually, are capable of a certain sympathy with the French character, in which we are wanting.

The combination of the power of representing passion and emotion with that of imagining or conceiving it, that is, of the theatrical talent with the dramatic temperament, is essential to make a good actor; their combination in the highest possible degree alone makes a great one.

There is a specific comprehension of effect and the means of producing it which, in some persons, is a distinct capacity, and this forms what

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actors call the study of their profession; and in this, which is the alloy necessary to make theatrical that which is only dramatic, lies the heart of their mystery and the snare of their craft in more ways than one: and this, the actor's *business*, goes sometimes absolutely against the dramatic temperament, which is nevertheless essential to it.

Every day lessens the frequency of this specific combination among ourselves, for the dramatic temperament, always exceptional in England, is becoming daily more so under the various adverse influences of a state of civilization and society which fosters a genuine dislike to exhibitions of emotion, and a cynical disbelief in the reality of it, both necessarily repressing, first, its expression, and next, its existence. On the other hand, greater intellectual cultivation and a purer and more elevated taste are unfavourable to the existence of the true theatrical spirit; and English actors of the present day are of the public, by being "nothing if not critical," and are not of their craft, having literally ceased to know "what belongs to a frippery." They have lost for the most part alike the dramatic emotional temperament and the scenic science of mere effect, and our stage is and must be supplied, if supplied at all, by persons less sophisticated and less civilized. The plays brought out and revived at our theatres of late years bear doleful witness to this. We have in them archæology, ethnology, history, geography, botany (even to the curiosity of ascertaining the Danish wild-flowers that Ophelia might twist with her mad straws), and upholstery; everything, in short, but acting, which it seems we cannot have.

When Mrs. Siddons, in her spectacles and mob-cap, read *Macbeth* or *King John*, it was one of the grandest dramatic achievements that could be imagined, with the least possible admixture of the theatrical element; the representation of the *Duke's Motto*, with all its resources of scenic effect, is a striking and interesting theatrical entertainment, with hardly an admixture of that which is truly dramatic.

Garrick was, I suppose, the most perfect actor that our stage has ever produced, equalling in tragedy and comedy the greatest performers of both; but while his dramatic organization enabled him to represent with exquisite power and pathos the principal characters of Shakspeare's noblest plays, his theatrical taste induced him to garble, desecrate, and disfigure the masterpieces of which he was so fine an interpreter, in order to produce or enhance those peculiar effects which constitute the chief merit and principal attraction of all theatrical exhibitions.

Mrs. Siddons could lay no claim to versatility—it was not in her nature; she was without mobility of mind, countenance, or manner; and her dramatic organization was in that respect inferior to Garrick's; but out of a family of twenty-eight persons, all of whom made the stage their vocation, she alone pre-eminently combined the qualities requisite to make a great theatrical performer in the highest degree.

Another member of that family—a foreigner by birth, and endowed with the most powerful and vivid dramatic organization—possessed in so

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small a degree the faculty of the stage, that the parts which she represented successfully were few in number, and though among them there were some dramatic *creations* of extraordinary originality and beauty, she never rose to the highest rank in her profession, nor could claim in any sense the title of a great theatrical artist.—This was my mother. And I suppose no member of that large histrionic family was endowed to the same degree with the natural dramatic temperament. The truth of her intonation, accent, and emphasis, made her common speech as good as a play to hear, (oh, how much better than some we *do* hear!) and whereas I have seen the Shakspeare of my father, and the Shakspeare and Milton of Mrs. Siddons, with every emphatic word underlined and accentuated, lest they should omit the right inflection in delivering the lines, my mother could no more have needed such notes whereby to speak *true* than she would a candle to have walked by at noonday. She was an incomparable critic; and though the intrepid sincerity of her nature made her strictures sometimes more accurate than acceptable, they were inestimable for the fine tact for truth, which made her instinctively reject in nature and art whatever sinned against it.

I do not know whether I shall be considered competent to pass a judgment on myself in this matter, but I think I am. Inheriting from my father a theatrical descent of two generations and my mother's vivid and versatile organization, the stage itself, though it became from the force of circumstances my career, was, partly from my nature and partly from my education, so repugnant to me, that I failed to accomplish any result at all worthy of my many advantages. I imagine I disappointed alike those who did and those who did not think me endowed with the talent of my family, and incurred, towards the very close of my theatrical career, the severe verdict from one of the masters of the stage of the present day, that I was "ignorant of the first rudiments of my profession."

In my father and mother I have had frequent opportunities of observing in most marked contrast the rapid intuitive perception of the dramatic instinct in an organization where it preponderated, and the laborious process of logical argument by which the same result, on a given question, was reached by a mind of different constitution (my father's), and reached with much doubt and hesitation, caused by the very application of analytical reasoning. The slow mental process *might* with time have achieved a right result in all such cases; but the dramatic instinct, aided by a fine organization, was unerring; and this leads me to observe, that there is no reason whatever to expect that fine actors shall be necessarily profound commentators on the parts that they sustain most successfully, but rather the contrary.

I trust I shall not be found wanting in due respect for the greatness that is gone from us, if I say that Mrs. Siddons' analysis of the part of "Lady Macbeth" was to be found *alone* in her representation of it—of the magnificence of which the "essay" she has left upon the character gives not the faintest idea.

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If that great actress had possessed the order of mind capable of conceiving and producing a philosophical analysis of any of the wonderful poetical creations which she so wonderfully embodied, she would surely never have been able to embody them as she did. For to whom are all things given? and to whom were ever given, in such abundant measure, consenting and harmonious endowments of mind and body for the peculiar labour of her life?

The dramatic faculty, as I have said, lies in a power of apprehension quicker than the disintegrating process of critical analysis, and when it is powerful, and the organization fine, as with Mrs. Siddons, perception rather than reflection reaches the aim proposed; and the persons endowed with this specific gift will hardly unite with it the mental qualifications of philosophers and metaphysicians; no better proof of which can be adduced than Mrs. Siddons herself, whose performances were, in the strict sense of the word, excellent, while the two treatises she has left upon the characters of "Queen Constance" and "Lady Macbeth"—two of her finest parts—are feeble and superficial. Kean, who possessed, beyond all actors whom I have seen, tragic inspiration, could very hardly, I should think, have given a satisfactory reason for any one of the great effects which he produced. Of Mdlle. Rachel, whose impersonations fulfilled to me the idea of perfect works of art of their kind, I have heard, from one who knew her well, that her intellectual processes were limited to the consideration of the most purely mechanical part of her vocation; and Pasta, the great lyric tragedian, who, Mrs. Siddons said, was capable of giving her lessons, replied to the observation, "Vous avez dû beaucoup étudier l'antique," "Je l'ai beaucoup senti." The reflective and analytical quality has little to do with the complex process of acting, and is alike remote from what is dramatic and what is theatrical.

There is something anomalous in that which we call the dramatic art that has often arrested my attention and exercised my thoughts; the special gift and sole industry of so many of my kindred, and the only labour of my own life, it has been a subject of constant and curious speculation with me, combining as it does elements at once so congenial and so antagonistic to my nature.

Its most original process, that is, the conception of the character to be represented, is a mere reception of the creation of another mind—and its mechanical part, that is, the representation of the character thus apprehended, has no reference to the intrinsic, poetical, or dramatic merit of the original creation, but merely to the accuracy and power of the actor's perception of it; thus the character of "Lady Macbeth" is as majestic, awful, and poetical, whether it be worthily filled by its pre-eminent representative, Mrs. Siddons, or unworthily by the most incompetent of ignorant provincial tragedy queens.

This same dramatic art has neither fixed rules, specific principles, indispensable rudiments, nor fundamental laws; it has no basis in positive science, as music, painting, sculpture, and architecture have; and differs

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from them all, in that the mere appearance of spontaneity, which is an acknowledged assumption, is its chief merit. And yet—

> This younger of the sister arts,
> Where all their charms combine—

requires in its professors the imagination of the poet, the ear of the musician, the eye of the painter and sculptor, and over and above these, a faculty peculiar to itself, inasmuch as the actor personally fulfils and embodies his conception; his own voice is his cunningly modulated instrument; his own face the canvas whereon he portrays the various expressions of his passion; his own frame the mould in which he casts the images of beauty and majesty that fill his brain; and whereas the painter and sculptor may select, of all possible attitudes, occupations, and expressions, the most favourable to the beautiful effect they desire to produce, and fix, and bid it so remain fixed for ever, the actor must live and move through a temporary existence of poetry and passion, and preserve throughout its duration that ideal grace and dignity, of which the canvas and the marble give but a silent and motionless image. And yet it is an art that requires no study worthy of the name: it creates nothing—it perpetuates nothing; to its professors, whose personal qualifications form half their merit, is justly given the meed of personal admiration, and the reward of contemporaneous popularity is well bestowed on those whose labour consists in exciting momentary emotion. Their most persevering and successful efforts can only benefit, by a passionate pleasure of at most a few years' duration, the play-going public of their own immediate day, and they are fitly recompensed with money and applause, to whom may not justly belong the rapture of creation, the glory of patient and protracted toil, and the love and honour of grateful posterity.

FRANCES ANNE KEMBLE.

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Margaret Denzil's History.

(*Annotated by her Husband.*)

CHAPTER IV.

At Madame Lamont's.

Madame Lamont's method with a newly-bereaved pupil was to leave her alone with her grief till the first tremblings of the shock of separation had ceased. And so when my company had quite departed (I watching them, with various feelings, at the casement), she brought some cakes and a small glass of wine into the drawing-room, and placed them near me by the window, saying in a bland voice which nicely balanced the severity of her manner, "Now, my dear, you want to cry all alone; I know it is the way with all good girls at such times. When the storm is past, we will begin to make friends of each other; only that can never be if you do not dry your tears and drink your wine by the time I come to ask you to take tea with me." With that she kissed my forehead, as ceremoniously as if it were "the book," and left me, far more disposed than she imagined to drink the wine at once and not to cry at all. Indeed, I did drink the wine as soon afterward as I dared, and ate all the cakes.

The afternoon wore away in silence. The sunshine poured in upon me through the window, with eager, tremulous, unconscious life; while all the life that I was conscious of, as I sat there in a maze of vaguest, dreamiest speculation, was like a candle-flame etherealized, almost drowned and lost in the sunlight. But as the dusk came on, the lamp of life within me burned in a brighter, homelier, warmer way, and when, by and by, I saw a lady walk up to the house with another little girl, I dropped fairly into the sphere of my common senses, and even felt equal to the ordeal of taking tea with madame, whenever she pleased to send for me. Nor was it long before I was summoned to madame's sitting-room.

The other little girl was not there, much to my disappointment. She, as I had already divined from the miserable apprehensive glances she cast about her, was also a new pupil. A walk in the fields had failed to divert her, and she had begged permission to go to bed outright, with her poor little headache.

But the lady was there—she with whom a walk in the fields had failed to be diverting. She was madame's daughter and assistant—a woman no longer young, and her name was Weariness. When I entered the room, she was sitting at table with her back to the door, her head resting on her hand, over which long thick masses of ruddy brown hair drooped with an expression of languor subtle beyond description. It was not till her

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mother, taking me by the hand, led me up to her, that Miss Lamont turned her head, to fix on me a pair of great eyes without a spark of welcome or inquiry in them. They were the eyes of weariness, too tired for sympathy with anything. The drooping lines of her somewhat coarse mouth also told of a weariness that would fain become oblivion. Her smile was a smile without life; the hand was heavy and cold in which she took mine, saying simply, "Good evening, my dear!"

Madame Lamont looked at her daughter rather surprised and impatient, I thought, as if she would have said, "This is not the way of business even, Charlotte." Upon which the daughter made reply after the same manner, but more clearly. She did not care, her eyes said; and if the sea came up and drowned all schools and schoolmistresses, still she would not care. So I interpreted the glances which passed between the ladies—glances which they took no great pains to disguise in the presence of a country-born child of thirteen.

Madame made amends. She placed a chair for me at her side, gave me some tea, and began forthwith to make known, in a bubbling fountain of talk, how pleasant my life should be at Valley House School. Not that I, all forlorn, heard much that she said. Besides, I was chiefly intent upon the countenance of Miss Lamont, who said nothing, but amused herself by dissolving pieces of sugar in her spoon for the pleasure of seeing them sapped and falling into ruin. It is a hypochondriacal employment; and as I looked upon the crumbling rocks of sweetness and then upon the lady's fallen face, I maundered miles away into the speculation whether she had not at some time suffered under a process of similar kind. Valley House School was clearly no paradise for her; but that, perhaps, was because she was now too old for any particular enjoyment of the privilege which madame most enlarged upon — permission to feed the chickens and to find their eggs.

"Have you pigs, too?" I asked; for I felt it was time for me to say something.

"Pigs!" echoed madame, with a little laugh.

"We will get one for you, if you would like it!" said Miss Lamont, creamily unkind, but without interest enough to lift her eyes from her sugar ruin.

"Roast!" madame added, as if it were a joke—pitying my confusion. For here was my old fortune begun again already. How had I betrayed, in my very first words, on my very first evening, the vulgar associations of my "sphere!" And how clearly those associations must appear about me since it was actually proposed to keep a pig at Valley House for my consolation. If that could really have been meant! or if it was a joke! I blushed so much that my shame and vexation reddened the silence that fell on us, or so it seemed to me, with my eyes burning hot.

"Charlotte," said Madame Lamont, speaking softly and rapidly in French, but not so quickly that her meaning escaped me, "a little consideration, I pray you. What has happened I cannot divine, but let us

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keep our bitterness for ourselves. This little one is to have a bad night, and we should remember that it can begin too soon."

"Mamma," returned her daughter, coldly, in the same tongue ("Maman!" and she so very, very old—more than thirty!) "blame the weather. I do not know why, but this is a day of the devil for me! I do not know! What does the almanac say?"

I named the day, in plain English.

Both ladies were startled at the interruption—not so much, it may be, because of my plain English as because of the name of the day. Perhaps it was a memorable day—the anniversary of the time when that tear flood came which melted the younger lady into the moist clay image of a woman she appeared to-night; and perhaps the day, coming round again, was felt without being remembered or observed till I named it.

Madame glanced at her daughter uneasily. At the moment I spoke, her daughter looked up at me, fairly for the first time; and as she looked her face was no longer uninquiring and no longer pale. Dead to all affairs of human interest before, some life was suddenly called back into it at the sound of my voice; but even then only in a bewildered manner. It lingered a little while, as if it could not possibly have any business to stay, and then almost died out again. Slowly she turned her eyes away to think apart. But as if she was not solitude enough for herself at that moment, she presently left the room, murmuring the word "curious" as she gazed on me in passing, with eyes that seemed rather to listen than to see.

Madame Mère—who looked more angry than anxious, without showing much feeling of any kind—apologized for her daughter, who had really made me uneasy. It was a headache; a torturing fit of *ennui*. "But *you* are a brave little girl," said she: "so much is plain already."

From this point it was easy to glide again into the stream of entertaining prattle which my question about the pigs had interrupted. I hope I gave proper attention to it at the time. Now I only remember how much more at ease I felt when madame's exertions to amuse me began to flag; as they did by and by when she became as much absorbed in her own reflections as I in mine.

Her daughter's long absence vexed her. She rang the bell, and her maid entered. Where was Miss Charlotte? In her room. The maid had occasion to speak with her just now, and knocked, but was not admitted.

"Wait," said madame; and, going to her writing-table, took a broad sheet of paper and scribbled a message upon it. The sheet had not yet been folded, however, when a rustling was heard in the hall, and Miss Lamont entered—changed for the better. Her mother slipped the message into the desk.

"I am so glad you have come down," said she. "You know I must see Miss Forster's boxes unpacked and her things placed out tidily; and—and I scarcely know what else does not need my attention."

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"I have not forgotten that, mamma. Leave Miss Forster to my care;" and in token that she seriously designed to entertain me, Miss Lamont exhibited some books which she had brought down with her.

My heart fainted. What a prospect was this before me! It was with positive fear that I raised my head to know the worst, when I heard the door shut madame out and her daughter in. But there was little to be alarmed at. Already the headache, the torturing fit of *ennui*, seemed to have passed away; and though no arrangement of her hair that Miss Lamont ever achieved gave it a look of life, its ruddy masses were now less moribund than when she took them from the room. They were displayed in ringlets—great heavy curls, clustered together without any of their natural gaiety, but rather like hybernating serpentine creatures, tawny and innocent. Embellished in this out-of-date fashion—which I never afterwards saw her assume, and which on this occasion was only put on by way of setting herself in harmony with certain tyrannical reminiscences,—she sat down to devote herself to me.

And now it appeared that not she, but I was the dreadful personage. Emotions of which I had no conception then, simmered in the heart of Weariness; and of the two, I was really calmest when she took me by the hand, though all she had to ask was whether I did not think her rude just now? Of course I thought she had been disagreeable, and so made no answer.

"Speak, Margaret," she said, "I want to hear you speak."

"Well, I did not know what I was saying, ma'am, when I asked about —about the pigs."

"And I scarcely knew what I answered."

"That was because of your headache?"

"Because of my headache," repeated Echo, drowsily—looking on my mouth, meanwhile, as though she would fain see my words as well as hear them.

"Do you read nicely, Margaret?"

"I don't know," I replied, with my eyes already wandering in a book of religious poems that lay on the table. "Will you hear me?"

"Exactly what I wish. But not from that book—poetry is not the best test. Take this one, child."

"This one" was a story-book—no other than the *Sorrows of Werther;* and Miss Lamont opened it at a place where the name of the heroine appeared all over the page.

"About Charlotte," I said. "That is your name, Miss Lamont;" an idle remark in itself, but significant enough if the book was selected not simply because it was a love-story (the worst of reasons), but because the name Charlotte had to be repeated so often in reading it.

I read. It was my first introduction to literature of its kind, and I was so charmed and bewildered, especially as I was thrown at once into the middle of the story, that the mere graces of elocution must soon have

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been forgotten. 'Twas all the same to Miss Lamont. Once when I looked up from the book, I saw that she listened with as much abstraction as a child at a fairy tale, and that her eyes were still fixed upon my lips. *Now* I know why. She had read of Werther's sorrows for herself more than once; her interest was in *my* reading—in my voice, that repeated "Charlotte, Charlotte," so many times, and always tenderly; for was not this a love-story?

At the end of the chapter I stopped; but it was not till some moments afterwards that my listener ceased to listen.

"That will do," she said at length, putting on her governmental dignity. "You read very well; and I—I wonder where you found that beautiful voice? But it is a nonsensical book, and we'll have no more of it."

With that she put the heavenly volume of suspirations into her pocket, and left me to the *Christian Year*, while she occupied herself with a little brown Latin book. It was not long, however, before my acquirements were again investigated.

"Do you read writing easily, Margaret? That is important too."

I could only shake my head at this. I knew nothing of writing but my own exercises.

"Let us see. I think I've something here," said Miss Lamont, and took from her pocket a paper of verses which appeared to me at first sight totally illegible; all but a line of embossed printing at the top, "—th Hussars."

"I have never seen such handwriting as this," I said, apologetically.

"No," answered Miss Lamont, hesitating; "I think—I cannot think you have. But read all the same, Margaret. It is a soldier's writing, and if you are not a soldier's daughter, you ought to have been."

Thus encouraged, I struggled forthwith into the first line, though it began with the name of a place which I had never before heard of.

On—on Linden when the scene—the sun was low,

and so on to the second stanza, at which point Madame Lamont entered unexpectedly.

The interruption was most timely and welcome, I thought; but not so did it seem to my sad inquisitor. She took the paper from my hands abruptly, folding it up as she said, "I see it is too difficult for you."

All this while madame looked on from the middle of the room, quietly remarking when the paper had been returned into Miss Lamont's pocket—

"I think I must be a little crazy to-night."

"Mamma?"

"As for you, my dear," continued madame, turning toward me with a smile, "it is settled that you are always to remain a child. Do you know your toys were packed with your books and clothes?"

"My toys, madame?"

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"All, I should say, down to baby's rattle, and the ivory ring that brought your teeth into the world."

This was overwhelming news. "It must be a mistake, I pleaded."

"Well, my dear, the toys were all in a box by themselves, and it may be so." But madame was evidently not quite satisfied with her own explanation, and certainly it gave no satisfaction to me. Not that I imagined any special significance in this freak of my mother's, yet more than that it was done to make me ashamed.

If that was her object, she succeeded well. I *was* ashamed. I could have cried outright if I had not been too proud, which madame perceiving, she affected to doubt no longer that the box had come by mistake. But now I luckily remembered that my luggage had been placed in the cart before daybreak that morning—in darkness almost—and that the toy-box was in my room, where it might naturally have been caught up unobserved with the others.

That was explanation enough for Madame Lamont; but I began to doubt more and more; and my head grew dizzy; and my eyes craved for darkness, and I asked permission to retire. That was not enough, though: I begged that I might sleep alone.

"Which means, Margaret, that you propose to lie awake and fret."

"No," said I, quite sincerely.

But madame doubted me, producing some lozenges which I was to be sure to take before composing myself to rest; they would cause me to sleep better, she said.

Miss Lamont went to madame's desk for paper to wrap the lozenges in, and took out that sheet which had the message scribbled upon it. Whether some big appealing "Dear Charlotte" caught Miss Lamont's eyes, I cannot tell; but while I waited,—shivering I knew not why,—to be taken to my strange bed, she read the message under the lamp in her short-sighted way, and then handed it to her mother, saying, in a subdued tone, "You do not know. It is nothing, of course; a vocal coincidence, let us call it; a fancy which I have done with. By and by I will tell you."

I wished, as I trembled out of the room, that people would not indulge themselves with mysterious sayings which it was stupid to suppose I did not notice. If I had only been left to myself all the evening with a book which asked no more attention than I could fairly give—! And if those toys had not come to make me ashamed, and put all sorts of bothering ideas into the tired head of poor me—! Yes, there they were. Madame had caused them to be brought to my room, saying, as she bade me good night at the door, "I thought you should see them, my dear, for this once more; they will be company for you, perhaps; but to-morrow we must lock them away in the box-room, of course." I answered that they might as well be taken there directly; but was not sorry, somehow, to hear the reply, "Never mind for to-night."

And as soon as they were gone—mistress and maid—I felt an irresistible longing to get up and look at these toys. True, there was no

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light in the room, but the night was very clear, and by pulling up the blind and haling the box to the window, I could make out the old familiar things well enough, I thought.

And so it was. The window was long and low. I placed the box beneath it, going softly on my naked feet; and kneeling down, I found the darkness growing lighter as I drew out first one forgotten toy and then another. They were poor things, bought for a few pence in a country town: little horses of wafer pattern, headless long ago; waggons with wheels and without them; a musical cart that twanged yet; dolls of many kinds, but all battered, soiled, and tawdry. There were my first picture-books; my first needle-case; bits of "patch-work," with the needles sticking in them; and there, too, among the many things—everything of this kind which I remembered to have possessed—was the box my English governess gave me: still locked.

I don't know how it was, but I felt very old when I had gathered these things into my lap and looked at them—remembering when this and that was brought home, and how that it was a fine day, or a wet day. I felt very old, and sad, and serious too. Sad, in a way easy to feel but hard to explain. Serious, for there was nothing here that I had not ceased to play with long ago; then why were they sent? To make me ashamed? or because my mother thought I should really like to have the dear old rubbish? Not by mistake; that I had already found out; for the box had been wrapped in canvas like the rest. There was another reason: Was it in token that I was never to go back to the forest any more? Was it as much as to say that they had done with me there? Well, then, I would not care!

But if I did not love them, I loved the forest; and it was with slow hands and a numb heart, in spite of myself, that I put back the toys, crept back to bed—and slept. Madame's lozenges had nothing to do with it, for I forgot to take them; but my head had scarcely touched the pillow when I fell asleep, without another thought for anybody or anything.

CHAPTER V.

My Happy Conversion.

It happened, as has already appeared, that on the day when I was delivered into the hands of Madame Lamont, another young lady was admitted into the school; *she* was not a strong-minded little girl of no affections and a hermit heart, and therefore it was arranged that she should sleep at present with madame's daughter, in a room adjoining mine, for "company;" and I woke in the night to hear her sobbing, and Miss Charlotte imperatively comforting her. "O dear mamma! O my dear, pretty mamma!" wept this little one, "let me come home." Then

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I understood Miss Lamont to explain that, with all that noise, the young lady in the next room would certainly wake, and hearing cries and tears for "mamma-a," would give way to affliction at last, and cry too. ——"At last!"

Now I was this young lady, and I was already awake, and heard that breaking of the heart which disturbed Miss Lamont's rest so viciously, and yet no tear came to *my* eyes. No tears when I sat at the window and saw myself abandoned, no tears when I pondered over my toys, no tears now. But listening to the other's grief, it was as if my whole body turned pale as I lay and wondered why I also did not grieve. The very governesses could not believe it of me. Surely my heart was hard! Or was my lot a hard one and not my heart? For if I did not feel my neighbour's sorrow I coveted it. When she sobbed "Mamma," I figured to myself a young, kind-looking, handsome lady seated in a pretty room with a bright fire in it, and by the fire a footstool. But when I considered what *I* had to grieve for, there came into my mind nothing but a boundless expanse of snow and mist. The difference was very great, and I envied my little neighbour's sufferings with a bitter envy. Long after she had dropt asleep, she and her sufferings and all, I lay debating the matter, but only to leave off as I began—without a tear: only I did not consider that some tears are wept, as some wounds bleed—within. And so when madame herself came to pay me a visit of consolation next morning—never doubting, I daresay, that I had held my heart still till I was alone in the dark—she had her pains for nothing. Madame could find in me no traces of grief at all; but her expectations of pale cheeks and red eyes were so just and so manifestly disappointed that I was almost ashamed to take the tiny cup of coffee which had been brought in aid of her comfortable exhortations.

In the schoolroom my indifference gave positive offence. There were only six young ladies beside myself and the other new pupil, Mary Day; but there was only one opinion—that Mary was a poor little dear, and that I was a heartless thing. Miss Phipps the elder found occasion to observe further that she had heard some people never gave way to grief because they were afraid of spoiling their eyes; upon which I, smiling, showed my school-fellows a set of teeth which no weeping could spoil nor any one of them match.

For the credit of my sex, I must own this was very naughty. But for my own sake I must say that I had a cold heart for my triumph. The time had not yet come when I was conceited of my beauty, but the time had come when I began to pine for a little love. In all my life I had never been blessed with any, and now when I looked round upon the angry faces of my schoolfellows, I longed to explain that I was only perverse because I was forlorn. But pride came in to stay my tongue, and I remembered the injunctions to be silent which I had so often heard. Silent, therefore, I remained; though I felt all the time that if any one of my companions would give me a kind glance, my eyes would stand a risk

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of being spoiled forthwith to the utmost satisfaction of Miss Phipps the elder. But my time was coming.

Naturally, I believe, I ought to have cherished a special resentment against Mary Day, who was ostentatiously petted at my expense. But I did not. On the contrary, it was to her I took most kindly, and before the third evening was over we agreed to ask permission to share the same room. For that is how we were lodged at Madame Lamont's—one room for every pair of pupils. This proposition, which madame readily consented to, originated with me; and now mark its selfishness. I wanted to satisfy my imagination with this little one's grief. To be sure, I did not know my own motives then, but now I have no doubt they were founded on some such notion as this: that if she wept in my arms, close to my bosom, I might feel and understand more of that mother's love which made her so wondrous rich, and her grief a thing so enviable.

The experiment succeeded, for we had quite a feast of tears that night. We cried together to begin with; and then I asked Mary what was the matter; and then she told me all about her dear mamma—oh! such a dear mamma!—and papa, whom she did not love quite so well, because he was black and never spoke to anybody, only a little to mamma. We dismissed him, therefore, without much discussion, though we were both breathless when Mary told me how rich he was, and how that, she thought, was because he was always "flooring" somebody. Not that she knew what flooring was, or whether lawyers always did it. I said I did not remember, and then we went back to mamma again.

First I had a minute description of her, which I pieced together into a lovely figure like those in the fashions' plates of milliner's magazines. Mamma was taller than Elizabeth (that was her housemaid), but not so stout as Jane, the cook, you know. She had seven silk dresses, and no one could tell which was prettiest. Her hair was black as ravens' wings, and she wore it in Adelaide curls. Her eyes were black, too, not a shiny black, like Miss Phipps', but soft black, like lead pencil; her lips were, oh, so beautiful to kiss—just like baby's, only nicer.

Now a baby was a thing of which I had scarcely a conception; but Mary's fervent "oh, so beautiful to kiss," was what struck me most.

"Then your mamma often kisses you?" I said in a tremor.

"Oh, yes, when I am at home. Every morning when nurse brings me down, there is mother with a kiss. And every night, when I am tucked in, up comes mamma, and says, "You have said your prayers, my dear?" and I say, "Yes, mamma;" and then she kneels down and says a little prayer all about me, with a bit at the end for baby. And then I have another kiss for Good-night. Always those two, Margaret; but oh, dear! oh, dear! I know she loves me all day long!"

This was hard for me to hear—instructive, but very hard. It was like reading with my fingers in a book how fair the fields are and how beautiful the skies. No mother had ever kissed my mouth; and all I

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knew about prayers was, that they were a sort of moral disciplinary thing, customarily used in schools. That "little prayer all about me, with a bit at the end for baby," gave me ideas new as revelation: it opened the boundaries of human love beyond anything I had yet dreamed; and I had dreamed of it and yearned for it more than tongue can tell. Already my mind had associated it, indistinctly, with every sweet and beautiful thing in the forest; but now I saw that it widened up to heaven and ended at the judgment day. I say I *saw;* and so I did. All the thoughts of imaginative children are pictures; and while my little bedfellow greeted anew at her home recollections, I saw mamma kneeling, and Mary with her face turned towards her, and a vast ocean of luminous mist that flowed upwards from the bedside to a great white throne on the far horizon. Believe what you please, but I saw the "little prayer" too; that is to say, I beheld a trembling of the air about the bedside—trembling and flowing away toward the far horizon.

Ah me! how good Mary Day must be, I thought; and so I told her. And how natural it was that I should be naughtier than other girls, which I did not tell; though at last I had no doubt I was. The fact had been represented to me often enough; but I never quite believed in it till now, when there appeared so good a reason for it. Only why I *deserved* to be naughtier than other girls, that puzzled me. And it was so melancholy to find myself dwindling into something utterly insignificant and unknown upon the shores of this boundless Love which reached to heaven, that I began to wish I had never heard about Mary Day's mamma at all: but that I had been left to such homely views of affection as a lost little kitten may have.

So I pretended to fall asleep that I might hear no more, and also that I might contemplate undisturbed another picture which came into my mind—a picture of myself, wandering about in the emerald and jasper heaven of the Revelation, like a child lost in the streets of a strange city —none knowing me, or taking me by the hand. But neither did this satisfy me long. Again I wanted to get back into Mary Day's home, and see its light, and feel its warmth; and just at the right moment she broke into a sudden ecstasy about her baby-brother. The consequence was, that the half-rebellious, all forlorn little dreamer of dreams and seer of visions became at once a mere woman-child again, and presently dropt to sleep in a perfect glow of sympathy with Mary Day's fond home, and the kickings and crowings of its wonderful infant. One thing, however, confused my ideas in a troublesome way. Mary assured me that baby's head was quite bald; and from that moment my conceptions of him were inextricably confounded with John Gilpin, as he appeared in a series of prints upon our walls at home.

All this is worth recording, because the evening, without being eventful, was really an important one in my history. Only I fail to record it with anything but a painful feebleness. I feel, when I try to set down the thoughts, and troubles, and speculations of that night, like one whose

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mind is gone—his eyes eagerly, vainly wandering along the lines of a book which give up its meanings no more. But it is well, perhaps, that we forget our dead—even our dead selves—and that our memories of them become ineffectual shadows as they are. Still I cannot *believe* that it is well, and much I wish I could recall better how it was that on that night I did get nearer to the love I longed for, notwithstanding that at first it only seemed farther off, more hopeless, more strange to me than ever. But, somehow, the experiment of poaching on little Miss Day's sorrows, and sharing them, did succeed—to a miracle I might say, because it seemed to be worked while I slept, by agencies apart. For my sleep that night was sweet as music; and when in the morning I woke, and my schoolfellow said, "Now I'll be your mamma—Good morning, Margaret," and kissed me, I felt at last that I really belonged to my kind.

Thenceforward I grew content. Every day found me happier—more like a Christian child and less like a forest-born pagan waif, with nothing for my portion but a burning sense of the beauty and joy of life, in me and in all natural things. Without that most rich gift I don't know what I might have been; but it was good too, I found, to feel like a human creature amongst human creatures. A little while, and I even learned to like Miss Phipps; while as for Mary Day, she and I became the fondest friends ever known in a boarding-school for young ladies. We formally adopted each other as sisters. We plotted to dress as much alike as the arrangements of superior powers permitted, and, so far from having secrets apart, we used to make secrets, I verily believe, for the pleasure of sharing them.

But, warned by my unhappy life in Paris (though I am conscious one half the unhappiness was bred of my own rebellious mind), one thing I never betrayed—my parentage. Of course, concealment could not have been long maintained without Madame Lamont's silence. She knew, however, that amongst my schoolfellows I called myself an orphan, yet never did she contradict me, even by those gentle arts of implication which every woman is proficient in. This was only the tact of one experienced in the world, no doubt; but sometimes I wondered whether madame had not better grounds for her silence than I for my assertion. But however that might be, I was grateful that she said nothing, and this again helped to make me a more docile Miss Forster than had hitherto been known to governesses.

[It is never too soon to clear up misapprehensions, as I have found to my cost; therefore let me set down at once that Madame Lamont was a good enough kind of woman, ignorant of my dear Margaret's history, and caring nothing about it. It was all fair sailing between us, or very nearly. Of course I did not tell Madame Lamont *everything*, and she was a needy woman (as I believe most schoolmistresses are), who did not seek to know everything. The bargain stood simply thus :—"Here" said I (in effect),

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" is a young girl I am interested in, having neither kith nor kin of my own. She is being brought up in a dangerous way at present, I fear, and has some peculiarities of temper. It is said she is fanciful, and not always to be relied on for telling the truth; though, as for the latter accusation, I doubt it. However, I shall be glad if you will take her and educate her carefully at my charge." And this, with the customary exchange of references, was all, except that Madame Lamont clapt ten guineas a year upon her usual terms; though I thought little of that under the circumstances. As for Miss Lamont ("Lamont," when they were as English as they could possibly be!), I need not say I knew nothing of her story. It was very curious, but then I never liked the young woman.—J.D.]

CHAPTER VI.

CONFIDENCES UNDESERVED.

AND now that I have described by what accident I began a new and happier life, I do not propose to describe its details in the next two or three years.

What can be said? There we were, eight young ladies in a scholastic dovecot, living strictly in family: eight young ladies so different in appearance, that we might have been supposed to represent half-a-dozen counties at least, but with not more than three varieties of character among us; and of these I had one to myself. Then there was Miss Charlotte, who possessed a certain kind of individuality, to be sure, such as I have described it. She was much talked of amongst us girls, for there was a romantic story to account for her, though when and how it was first told, none of us knew. It was said that at seventeen she had fallen in love with a Catholic magnate in a procession. She had wept over her hopeless passion, Miss Phipps assured me (Miss P. was the senior pupil, and herself much addicted to love), nine days and nights continually; for six months she could not be dissuaded from a religious life, and then only yielded to become permanently callous. This was the story: the lustreless eyes of Miss Lamont being generally accepted as proof of its authenticity. "Cried for nine days and nights! Look at her eyes now!" And certainly her distraught manner on the evening of my introduction to her, favoured the romance too (though I never discussed it amongst my schoolfellows); and, moreover, the story had all the authority of tradition. It had been handed down to Miss Phipps from a previous generation of boarders.

Finally, there was Madame Lamont, a woman who must have been supremely beautiful in her youth, for she was still handsome and vigorous at fifty-four; and a strange sight it was to me to see her (as I once did) eagerly counting turnips, or concentrating the scarcely faded splendours

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of a face like Josephine's on the cutting up of beef for to-day's dinner and to-morrow's. Beauty, then, was not inappropriate to that at last, even in well-regulated households! It was very puzzling. Madame was always in debt too, I fear, and accustomed to sordid thoughts and painful shifts. Not but that we were well cared for, and well taught. Miss Charlotte had most of the knowledge and most of the drudgery of teaching, while as for madame, her chief business was to pervade the school with morality and manners. She was really a woman of great dignity and elegance, in spite of her bread-and-butter troubles, and nobody guessed at *them*. They were so well concealed that they were known to only one unimportant little person in the establishment, and she—that is I—discovered them out of school.

For you should know that when it appeared that I must spend the vacations lonely at Valley House or doubtfully in the forest, my kind guardian arranged with Madame Lamont that she should transport me and her daughter to some lively watering-place, or, in winter, to town. What my guardian's share of the expense was on these occasions, of course, I do not know;* but I am sure madame did not always think the holiday an unmixed benefit for herself. And surely a sea-side lodging-house is, of all places, the most dreadful for the contemplation of one's own poverty.

It was in a house at Brighton—a house of gentility without and of rapacious misery within—that the wolf that walked at madame's side came into the light. For three days it had rained without ceasing. I had sickened of drawing exercises, we all had sickened of the library (mine were "goody" books every one), and of looking out of window. I say we all, but it is doubtful whether Miss Lamont should be included. *She* was always the same, though she gained in grace by whatever seemed to give a reason for her clay-cold lethargy. The lamp was lit. There was nothing to do but to net purses; and seeing us engaged in that way, madame could no longer resist the impulse to look her wolf in the face, for he was her rainy-day enemy. Then it appeared that she had brought her account-books down in an old leathern writing-case. She spread them before her, and jauntily sat down to them, saying that here she should find some amusement, no doubt.

Now, what amusement there was in book-keeping I had yet to learn: and so it was that I looked up now and then to judge of the entertainment by madame's countenance. At first it seemed an indifferent occupation enough; but soon a sad change became manifest. She was unaware of it, no doubt. She was gradually absorbed and bewildered out of consciousness; and did not know, perhaps did not care at the moment, how pale she was, looking into the jaws of the future. But I saw it, and not quite understanding the reason why, was troubled. Miss Lamont never looked up from her netting, and therefore was perfectly composed. All

* A pretty considerable part.—J. D.

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this struck me as strange and unnatural; and unable to endure it long without doing something, I invented a little catarrh.

This brought madame back to her company, if it failed to inspirit her daughter. "Ah," said the embarrassed accountant, "you two are very busy making purses; if you were as dexterous in filling them, I would make one as big as my nightcap. And that would not be too big."

"So I suppose," Miss Lamont murmured, still without raising her head.

"You don't know, Charlotte?"

"I confess I am more eager for a nightcap I could always sleep in."

"Which is exactly my desire. A Fortunatus' cap is the only one I am likely to sleep in. That is what comes of being an old woman. Pray for everlasting youth, Margaret, if you would always be indifferent to money," madame added, addressing me with as much gaiety as vexation allowed her to put on, for vexed she was obviously; it was told in the hasty way in which she returned to her cabalistical books, where I have no doubt the genius of debt rose at her from her every page.

And this is why I have no doubt of it. Not only by the manifest concern which again overcame her; but presently shading her face with one hand, she wrote two or three lines upon a scrap of paper, and (her face still hidden) pushed it across the table to me.

"How do you read that?" she asked, as if it were a school question. Besides, how could I know that, in her perturbation, Madame Lamont had mistaken my place at the table for her daughter's?

"Pressing debts," I read aloud, "a hundred and thirteen pounds. Other debts ——"

But there I was arrested by madame with a startled gesture, and also by her daughter, who quietly took the paper from my hand, saying—

"It is for me, my dear. Well, mamma, I hope you will soon be paid. It is really a sin that people should owe you so much money."

"Or that I should owe others so much?" said madame, with unexpected bitterness.

"Oh, is it so! I did not understand."

This remark was uttered with the same tranquillity (the tranquillity of acid in a jar) as the other; but Miss Lamont was herself vexed at last, perhaps, for immediately after the rejection of her dutiful white lie she found a pretext for leaving the room.

There was an awkward silence now for a while; one of those silences in which we can almost hear the hustling of rapid thoughts. Madame recovered her composure first, of course, but still there was some trepidation in her voice when she called me, and holding my hand as I stood before her, said—

"How old are you now, my dear?"

"I was fifteen on my last birthday, you know, madame."

"Fifteen, and almost a woman! But I need not have asked you; for

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I know you are at any rate wise enough not to notice unkindly whatever unpleasant things you may be forced to see *en famille* by becoming one of us, for so you really are. That is your misfortune. I have never forgotten it is a misfortune for you; and I ask—no, I do not ask you to be kind to mine, for that I see you are, by your looking so ashamed at having discovered my shame."

"Not shame, madame."

"Yes, Margaret, shame. Debt is shameful. You see what it has done for us to-night. It led poor Charlotte into a fib which was amiable, and which she thought necessary; but it is my duty to tell you it could not be innocent, because it was degrading. You see how much I trust to your good sense in using such language."

"Don't, then, dear madame."

"But I ought, and I must, unless I am to give you examples of petty degradation without warning you of the mischief. And what followed upon Charlotte's fib—which was not harmless to herself, even if no one else is injured by it? I lose temper in your presence, and am rude to her: all by the irritation and shame of debt."

"But Miss Lamont was not kind to you!" I exclaimed.

"What do you mean, my dear?" she asked, wistfully.

"She—she did not care!"

"And you do!" said Madame Lamont, at which my heart began to swell out of all proportion. But had I not just been told that I was almost a woman?

Madame Lamont turned her face thoughtfully to the lamp for a moment (which helped me to set up unstable womanhood again), and then continued,—

"You are my daughter too, to-night; and I will not stop short in the lesson now that it has begun, unfortunately. Besides, we must do justice to Charlotte. You think she does not care for anything. Now, suppose I told you that *that* comes originally of debt?"

"I do not understand."

"No, my dear, nor can I explain. But justify my confidence in you by taking what I say not as a matter of curiosity, but like a geographical fact, for instance, which you are not obliged to sift and verify. It is something painfully told for your good, and rather to settle curiosity, in fact. And after what you have seen and said——"

"I have no curiosity at all, madame, and I hope I have said nothing. I am sure I never will!"

"Thank you," she said, looking that pathetic, painful picture—a woman struggling against conscious humiliation. "But as for Miss Lamont, and that she doesn't care. It is not much to tell you now, Margaret, that her fault is her unhappiness; and though I think she may not see the matter fairly, she has reason enough to believe that my debts first occasioned the unhappiness. Well, then, if she does not care for what has made her careless, I ought not to be surprised; you see it is

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all according to the fatal logic of debt. And so we must not again be angry with her, though she appear never so heartless—by which I rather mean hopeless, you know; and whenever——"

("The Catholic gentleman must be at the bottom of it, though," I thought.)

—"and whenever you see me very unhappy, whisper to yourself 'debt,' and resolve to avoid what is always a curse, and to women a fatal curse. But whisper it to no one else. For if you do—if my embarrassments became known to the parents of your school-fellows, what would happen, do you think?"

I shook my head, for I saw that she did not mean that the parents would help her out of the embarrassments.

"There would probably be an end to our daily bread, my dear."

"Then I'll be torn to pieces by wild horses first," I exclaimed, angry and sorry at once.

"Do, Margaret," said madame, smiling, "for on that condition I know I shall be safe."

With this grim small joke, she released my hand in token that the conversation was ended, and kissed me to seal what had been said. The hateful "books" were put aside, and so eager was I to see them disposed of in the writing-case again, that I hurried to help madame, and in my haste pushed two of the horrible neat little volumes from the table on to the floor. With equal eagerness I picked them up, spite of madame's deprecations. One of them had fallen open, and I could not avoid seeing that it had a pictorial frontispiece—a water-colour portrait stuck upon the inside of the cover. However, I was too unfamiliar with account-books to discern anything very remarkable in that.

The books coffined and locked in, Madame Lamont took up Charlotte's purse; I resumed work upon my own, with leisure to ponder madame's unwilling confidences, which had this secret satisfaction for me, that they made me still more a "woman." Apart from the timid flutterings of exultation which even the bare idea occasioned, whenever it came in, the result of my meditations was a revulsion of feeling against Miss Lamont. Madame had apologized for her, not only with generosity, but with decorum. I felt it was in a great measure what I might now call an apology of society; one which she knew would be accepted as beyond her daughter's deserts, and her own culpability. That Charlotte kept an old, cold, corpse-like grievance between herself and the world, particularly including mamma, was plain; and recalling many little scenes and incidents which ought to have given me the discovery long ago, I saw in the same retrospect that madame had not always shown herself so tolerant of her daughter's wilful decease, as she had done to-night. And only debt! I failed to see that it was natural Miss Lamont "should not care," with such provoking consistency; and the notion returned that there must be something sentimental in the case to keep her grievance unburied. If not the Catholic gentleman, then somebody else.——Had

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Miss Lamont's sweetheart that she had when she was a young woman (it was inconceivable that she should have one now at *her* age!), had he been sent to prison for madame's debts?—and died there?

Being myself "almost a woman," I began to pity Miss Lamont again, at the mere supposition of such a thing. Between the meshes of my purse appeared pictures of the poor lover seized by brutal minions of the law, and thrust into gaol; pictures of him crouched half naked in the corner of a stone cell, haggard, hungry, dying, indifferent even to Miss Lamont, who, with her bonnet fallen to the back of her head, and her hair all down, stood gazing at him through the bars. Dreadful fate! if true. And every moment the probability seemed to increase, as the pictures grew larger and more distinct. Bits of detail came in with surprising harmony and meaning, the most remarkable being a sword and a pair of epaulettes, suspended from a nail in the prison wall. These I could not fail to connect instantly with the line embossed at the head of that copy of verses which Miss Lamont had given me to read, with so much mystery, on my first evening at school— "—th Hussars!"

Now, it was not that I thought of the paper first, and imagined the sword afterwards; on the contrary, the fancy recalled the fact, and therefore I was all the more impressed by what to my mind, untaught to disentangle the relations between cause and effect, seemed almost like an inspiration. There was probably a lover—a gentleman in the Hussars; there certainly was debt; debt's last terror, as I understood, was a gaol; and people died miserably in gaols; and Charlotte must have lost her lover, and yet the original cause of her disasters was debt—madame's debts: then the lover died in prison for those debts. Such, I suppose, was the artless process of deduction which amused, or rather amazed me.

Yes, but was it possible? Was Madame Lamont capable of allowing her daughter's lover to perish in prison, or was this only another of the romantic follies I had so often been taunted with? Romantic folly, no doubt. For looking into madame's face for the signs of a hard heart or a troubled conscience, I beheld nothing but the lady-like placidity and benevolence always shown there.

But she was little more at her ease than I myself perhaps; and it is probable that during my cogitations I had glanced towards her oftener, and with looks more speculative, than I was conscious of. However that may be, she suddenly threw down her netting, and going wearily to the window, announced with loud satisfaction that the rain had ceased, and the moon had risen very brightly.

"And so," she said, "I'll take a brisk, brief walk along the esplanade. It is too late for you, my dear; Miss Lamont will accompany me, no doubt."

Now I could not think nine o'clock of a moonlit summer evening too late; but then I loved to be alone, and was particularly pleased with the prospect of a "good think" in solitude to-night. Indeed it was rather

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as if the ladies had taken solitude away with them when the door closed, and I found myself quite alone.

More light, more warmth, more cosiness was shut in with the shutting of the door. No more purse-netting for me either; work dropped from my hands, and dream-making began. I went to the window, folded the curtains about me, and looked out upon the moonshiny street.

Now the moon always seemed mine, since that night of beauty and terror by the brook—at the pool. Its face was motherly; and though, whenever I looked on it and thought of that other face that was neither of heaven nor earth, the vision came back, it came back softened, more pensive, no longer terrible at all. In these chapters about my school-days at Madame Lamont's I have said nothing of the miraculous phantom, but it is not therefore to be supposed that I had quite forgotten it, or that it had forsaken me. No. But in the first place I do not like to write about it more than I must; and again, it is true that after my "conversion" opened a new and happier existence for me, I tried, if not to forget the old days, at any rate to put off my old self; and though it may presently appear that I did not succeed so well as I imagined, it did come to pass that by the time I am now writing about, I had ceased to brood over my visions and suspicions, and was content to think of them as soberer people might have done: as the children of a brain hive-full of wonders, alive with earnest fantasies. Still, I say, I had not quite forgotten that face, nor had it forsaken me. To-night I saw it almost as plainly as at first—only it seemed very, very far off, though it floated in the light that flowed over the flagstones of the street. It was more beautiful and tender now, but less significant; and I could think of other things in the same moment as I thought of it. Many scenes came back out of my past life; that life which was done and ended (apparently) when I came to Madame Lamont's; and though they were vividly interesting to me who had *lived* them, I could only be grateful to my kind guardian who had ended them all.

Have I said anything of him? Nothing of him, yet he was much to me at this time too, and had a large share of my thoughts. He came down to see me at distant intervals; passed an afternoon with us in a blunt, speechless, watchful manner, ascertained my wants, and went away to supply them. Sometimes he sent me a letter, which madame always read—by his desire, she said: there was nothing in them but "How do you do?" and "Hope you are still a good girl," and "Yours affectionately." Nothing, I say; but, besides their kindness, these letters made me feel that I belonged to the world out of doors, though what part I should probably play in it was a question I had never debated yet, and happily could not foresee. Still, kind as my guardian was, I do not suppose I should have thought of him much if he had not got gloomier as time went on, or if he had not told me lately (àpropos of a little headache of mine) of some disease which was consuming his life away. But while he spoke he looked so strong, with all the handsomeness

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which health bestows on the ugliest man, that I laughed: and then, for a moment, he *did* seem ill.*

Meanwhile here am I, a wise little woman in the window-seat, pondering the things which bright moonlight never failed to bring back to my memory. It was not in them, however, that I was most interested at present, but rather in what had happened that evening, and my romantic theory about Miss Lamont. On reflection I was not so satisfied with it; but still there was the hussar, and I could not help connecting him in a hazy, maundering way with the congelation of Charlotte's feelings. At length, when I had almost wandered away from the subject, the question started up in my mind—Whose portrait was that in the account-book? A portrait in an account-book? Not without special reasons, surely: reasons connected with the debts—and with Miss Lamont's unhappiness.

When this thought struck me, I pushed the curtain aside, that, not being able to see the portrait itself, I might at any rate look on what concealed it. There was the desk, sure enough; more, there was the key in the lock!

I confess. The next moment I stood before the worn leather box, with my fingers on the key; trembling with curiosity, burning with shame. The baser instinct carried me to the desk instantly; the better made me pause, breathless, on the threshold of my first dishonour. My heart, how it beat! my cheeks, how they burned! and yet I kept my hand upon the key. I listened—there was not a sound; but oh, if any one could see! But then it was not madame's accounts I wished to peep at, nor to pry into any of her secrets. What was there in a picture, a portrait, that should be of any moment, hidden? Besides, I had already seen it: there could be no harm, then, in looking again. No, I would not look, it was a guilty thing to do.——And at the same instant the desk was opened. The desk was opened, the book came into my hands, and there was the portrait under my eager shameful gaze. It was a picture of a young man—handsome, unknown to me, and not in military dress, even.

That was my grand discovery!

Looking at it—what had I learned, after all? That for some grave reason, or from some odd whim, Madame Lamont had affixed a man's portrait to the record of her debts, I had already seen, innocently; and now what more had I discovered to compensate for the sense of littleness, of unalterable dishonour, under which I shrank when those eyes of insensible paint met mine? Nothing. Stare as I would, they knew not me, and had nothing to reveal. In my heart I felt the emptiness of all ill-doing, as I snapped the lock to again—snapped it with a noise so sharp and

* I do not remember having said this, or Margaret laughing. But if so, I hit upon the very best word in the dictionary for my then condition, that's all. Only I wish to my heart I had borne with that Disease, instead of taking the mad means that I did to cure it.—J. D.

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dreadful that I started at the sound. In my face, when I stole like a slippered thief to the glass to see what I was now, I beheld all that I felt in my heart: it was a pale, empty face, with only the self-searching eyes alive. Well, I was punished. The world had come to an end now for me, it seemed, and every day would only be one nearer to the day of judgment.

See how we change. When I look back upon that little girl, shivering back to her window-seat, I love and pity and respect her as if she had never been me. Knowing full well how naughty she had been, Margaret's fault appears to me of no moment, and her shame as beautiful as it was great. Certainly it is touching. For I know I have no shame like that now for anything.

What could I do? Again, nothing. That which was done could not be undone: the face in the book came out upon the air wherever I turned my eyes, and seemed to say so. I began to wish—not that I had never done the wrong, that appeared so hopeless. I wished madame would leave me no longer alone—for how could I be trusted, or trust myself? I wished she would come and find me out. Or I might confess? No; for how could I begin, after the confidence she had shown me to-night? how, when I knew she had so much need to trust me? But I might lead to my own discovery by throwing the desk open, and then madame would herself begin.

Thus I stood debating miserably when a loud knock was made at the hall door—too loud to be Madame Lamont's, so loud that my heart beat even quicker yet. Had I been detected then? The windows opposite were dark, and I might have been watched by some one standing there, whom I could not see. But our curtains were drawn; and if I had disarranged them so that anybody could look in when I started from the window, I must have noticed it afterwards—yes, for my guilty eyes had searched everywhere, for fear I had been spied. As for the man whom I had seen standing in the street a little while since——

Some one entered below. A word or two passed hurriedly, and a man's feet came bounding up the stairs. Then there was a rapping at the door of the drawing-room; but how could I answer? Not that he waited more than a moment for permission, but walked gaily in. He was the man whose portrait I had been so wickedly looking at.

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Impulsive Criticism.

A LETTER

FROM "J. O." TO THE EDITOR OF THE "CORNHILL MAGAZINE."

SIR,—Mr. Thomas Hughes, a most accomplished and honest gentleman, and a very good friend of mine, has published, in the *Spectator* of the 31st of October, a criticism of my paper on the Mhow Court-martial. Mr. Hughes in exposing what I am sure he sincerely believes to be the unpardonable unfairness with which my paper is written, speaks so handsomely of me, its writer, and pays so many compliments to my pen at the expense of my conscience, that it is with great reluctance I dissect his article at all. But I feel that I owe a duty to those whose cause I have undertaken to advocate; and that were I to kiss in silence the rod with which Mr. Hughes has so rashly smitten me, it might be supposed that I admitted the accuracy and justice of his criticism, in which case others would suffer as well as myself.

I think, therefore, that I had better proceed to show, as I can very easily do, that Mr. Hughes does not understand the subject on which he attempts to confute me; that he has not taken reasonable pains to acquaint himself with its details, and that the arguments which he has used tend rather to establish than to subvert the case as stated by me.

Mr. Hughes opens his attack thus:—

"The first grave assertion of 'J. O.'s' 'story' is that the *morale* and discipline of the regiment were good when Colonel Crawley joined, and that he himself admitted this with respect to the non-commissioned officers and men."

This assertion Mr. Hughes ridicules as false and unfair.

Now, if my critic will turn to H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge's memorandum of the 18th December, 1862, he will see that the Commander-in-Chief of the British Army has therein stated that he possesses official proofs that at the time Colonel Shute handed over the 6th Dragoons to Colonel Crawley, the discipline and efficiency of that regiment were in a satisfactory state. And, in taking leave of his officers, in March, 1861, but one month before Colonel Crawley joined, Colonel Shute said to them in his valedictory address, "It has been with the greatest gratitude to my comrades, as well as with the greatest pride, that at every inspection and

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review of the Inniskillings, I have heard the regiment spoken of with admiration"—(p. 144).

With respect to the non-commissioned officers and men, I conceive that my "story" is sufficiently corroborated by the following extract from Colonel Crawley's own admissions on that point, which Mr. Hughes, strangely enough, represents himself as having read with attention:—"The state in which I found the regiment, the setting up of the men, their steadiness on foot-parade, their orderly and respectful conduct to their officers, the small amount of crime, and the general good feeling existing between the non-commissioned officers and the soldiers, showed me how good and beneficent had been Colonel Shute's command of the regiment, as far as the soldiery were concerned"—(p. 170).

Mr. Hughes next plunges rather wildly and unintelligibly into the evidence bearing on Colonel Crawley's alleged presence at the muster-parades of May, 1861, and January, 1862. He finally arrives at the same conclusion as myself—viz., "that Colonel Crawley was not on the ground during either of these parades;" but he pleads, on the colonel's behalf, that he was in the neighbourhood, and that he came on to the ground soon after the parades were over. This leaves the seven witnesses, who swore positively that they saw Colonel Crawley on the ground during these parades, in a very unpleasant position, from which I invite Mr. Hughes to extricate them.

My critic seems to forget that no charge was ever brought by Captain Smales against his colonel for culpably neglecting his regimental duties. The paymaster's insubordinate remarks were to the following effect:—

"You persecute me, and bring formal charges against me whenever I deviate in the most unimportant degree from my official duties. Do you never deviate from yours? Have you not been often absent from muster-parades at which you nevertheless have returned yourself present? Was not such the case on the 1st of May, 1861, and the 1st of January, 1862?"

Colonel Crawley replied to these queries by bringing charges of "falsehood and malice" against Captain Smales for having made them. Now, Mr. Hughes declares that he has carefully studied the whole of the evidence, and that Captain Smales' assertions were strictly true, for that Colonel Crawley had not been actually present at either of the parades in question. If so, where was "the falsehood and the malice?"

I have only one more observation to make. Mr. Hughes accuses me of having improperly and unfairly prejudged the case about to be tried at Aldershott; the subject of which is to be, according to Mr. Hughes, "the arrests of the sergeants, and the conduct of the court-martial at Mhow." Now there can be no denial that both these points have been effectually prejudged by far higher authorities than myself—viz., H.R.H. the Commander-in-Chief and the Judge Advocate-General. But it will

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scarcely be believed that Mr. Hughes has ventured upon his public criticism of my paper, and his public condemnation of myself, without taking the trouble to inform himself as to what the charges really are upon which Colonel Crawley is about to be tried. If he will inquire, he will find that they have nothing whatever to do either with the arrest of the sergeant-majors, or the conduct of the late trial.

The approaching inquiry is limited, first, as to whether Colonel Crawley carried out the orders of his superior officers in the arrest of Sergeant-major Lilley with unnecessary cruelty; and, secondly, as to whether he falsely stated that the alleged cruelty with which Lilley and his wife were treated, was to be attributed to the misconduct of his Adjutant, not to any orders given by himself.

I invite Mr. Hughes to cite a single sentence in my paper in the *Cornhill*, which prejudges either of these two points.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

J. O.

Naples, November 15.

London: Printed by Smith, Elder and Co., Little Green Arbour Court, Old Bailey.

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